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THE

Petworth MS

OF

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

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THE

Petworth MS

OF

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY

FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.

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First Series.

CLAY AND TAYLOR, THE CHAUCER PRESS, BUNGAY

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[1] Misplaced by the scribe, as its words show it was meant for a (spurious) *Pardoner-Shipman Link.*

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[1] Like the Corpus and Lansdowne MSS., the Petworth has a spurious l. 1778, instead of the genuine E 1777, p. 458 *S-T*, p. 253 *Pet.*, and a spurious l. 1816 (misplaced), p. 459 *S-T*, p. 254 *Pet.* Like Corp. and Lansd., it leaves out l. 1927-8, p. 461 *S-T*, p. 257 *Pet.*, but does not, like Lansd., leave out E 2281-8.

[2] The MS. wants the lines D 575—584, 609—612, 619—626, 717—720. They are supplied from MS. Reg. 17 D xv. The Petworth MS. also begins the Tale at l. 829 in the Preamble, p. 294, p. 357 *Six-Text.*

[3] The MS. wants st. 160, E 1170-76, p. 372 *Pet.*, referring to the Wife of Bath, and also wrongly puts the 4th stanza of the Envoy (st. 164 of the Tale) last, after the 5th and 6th, p. 373 *Pet.*

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[1] Like the Corpus and Lansdowne MSS., the Petworth leaves out F 1423-4 and 1433-4, and has a spurious line, F 1436 (misplaced), p. 520 *S-T*, p. 396 *Pet.* It also has not the lines F 1455-6, 1493-8 (p. 398-9), known only in the Ellesmere MS. Like Corp. and Lansd., Petworth has spurious lines for F 1529, F 1556, p. 523 *S-T.*, but it does not leave out F 1567-8, as Corp. and Lansd. do.

[2] The 4 'Modern Instances'—Peter the Cruel of Spain, Peter of Cyprus, Barnabo Visconti of Milan, and Count Ugolino of Pisa—are in their right place, after Zenobia, p. 559 *Pet.*, p. 268 *Six-Text.*

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GROUP A. FRAGMENT I.

§ 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE.

PETWORTH MS.

WHan that Aprille with̃ his shoures soote [leaf 1]
The drought of marche hath perced to þe roote
And bathes euery veyne in swich licoure
Of which vertue engendrid is þe floure 4
Whan zephirus eke with his swete breth̃
Inspired hath in euery holt and heth̃
The tendre croppis *and* þe yonge sonne
Hath in the ram his halfe cours yronne 8
And smale foules make melodye
That slepen al nyght with open eygh̃e
So prikeþ hem nature in here corages
Than longen folk to gon on pilgrymages 12
And palmers for to seke straunge strondes
To ferne halowes couthe in sondry londes
And specially fram euery shires ende
Of engelond to Caunterbury they wende 16
The holy blisseful martir for to seke
That hem hath holpen when that þey were seke
Byfille þat in that seson on aday
In southwerk atte Tabbard as I lay 20
Redy to wende on my pilgrymage
To Cantirbury with̃ ful devout corage
At nyht was come in to þat hostellerye
Wel nyne and twenty on a companye 24
Of sondry folk by auenture yfalle
In felaschipe *and* pilgrymes were þey alle
That toward Cañtirbery wolde ryde

The Chambres and stables weren wyde 28
And wel weren esed atte beste
And schortly whan the sonne was to reste
So hadde I spoken with hem euerychon
That I was of here felaschipe anon 32
And made forward erly for to ryse
To take oure wey there as I you deuyse
But natheles whil I haue tyme and space
Or þat I ferther in this tale pace 36
Me thynkeþ it accordant to reson
To telle yow al the Condicion
Of ech of hem so as it semed me [leaf 1, back]
And whiche they were. *and* of what degre 40
And eke in what array þat they were Inne
And at a knyght þan I wol first bigynne
A knyght þer was *and* þat a worthy man
That fro þe tyme þat he first bigan 44
To riden out. he louede Chyualrye
Trouthe *and* honour fredom and curtesye
fful worthy was he in his lordis werre
And therto hadde he ryden no man ferre 48
As wel in Cristendom as in hethenesse
And euere honoured for his worthynesse
¶ At Alisaundre he was whan it [was] wonne
fful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne 52
Aboven alle naciouns in Pruce
In lettowe had he reysed and in Ruce
No cristene man so ofte of his degre
In Gernade at the sege ek hadde he be 56
Of Algezire and riden in belmarye
At Lyeis was he and at Satalye
When they were wonne *and* in the grete see
At many a noble armeye had he be 60
At mortel batailles had he ben fyftene
And fouhten for oure faith at tramessene
In lystes thryes. and ay slayne his foo

This ilke worthy knyghtꝑ had ben also 64
Somtyme with the lord of Palatye
Ayeyn an othir hethen in Turkye
And euere more he hadde a souereyne pry
And thoughꝫ þat he was worthy he was wys 68
And of his portꝑ as meke as is a mayde
He neuer yet no velonye ne sayde
In al his lyf vnto no manere wightꝑ
He was a verrey parfitꝑ gentil knyghtꝑ 72
ffor to tellen yow of his array
His hors weren gode. butꝑ he was not gay
Of fustyon) he werede a gepoñ
Al bismotered with his habirgeon) 76
ffor he was late ycome from his viage [leaf 2]
And wente for to don his pilgrymage
With hym þer was his sone a yong squyere
A louyere and a lusty bachelere 80
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Of his stature he was ofꝑ euene lengtne
And wondirly delyuere and gretꝑ ofꝑ strengthe 84
And he hadde be somtyme in chyuachye
In fflaundres in Artoys and in Pikardye
And born him wel as of so litil space
In hope to stonde in his lady grace 88
Embroyded was he as it were a mede
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Syngynge he was. or floytynge al the day
He was also fressh as ys þe monethꝫ of may 92
Short was his gowne with sleves longe *and* wyde
Wel koude he sitte on an hors *and* faire ryde
He koude songes make. and wel endite
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Corteys he was lowely and servisable

And karf biforn his fadir at the table 100
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At[t] that[t] tyme. for hym lyst[t] ryde so
And he was clad in coote *and* hood of[f] grene
A sheef[f] of[f] pocok[k] arewes bryght[t] and kene 104
Vndir his belt[t] he bar full thriftily
Wel couthe he dresse his takel yemanly
Hise arewes drouped nogh̄t[t] with feþeres lowe
And in his hond he bar a myghty bowe 108
A not[t] hed hadde he with a broun visage
Of[f] wode craft wel couthe he al the vsage
Vppon his arme he bar a gay bracer[r]
And by his side a swerd and a bokeler[r] 112
And on that oþir syde a gay daggere
Harneysed wel *and* sharp as poynt[t] of[f] spere
A *Crist*offre on his brest[t] of seluer shene [leaf 2, back]
An horn he bar the bawdrik[k] was of grene 116
A foster was he sotly as I gesse
Ther was a no*n*ne also a prioresse
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And she was clepid ma dame Englentyne
fful wel she song[g] the seruyse divyne
Entuned in hire nose ful semyly
And frenshe she spak[k] ful faire and fetysly 124
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ffor frensch of Parys was to hire vnknowe
At mete wel I-taugh̄t was sche with alle
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Ne wete hire fyngres in hire sause depe
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That no drope ne fille vppon hire breste
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Hire ouer lippe wiped she so clene
That in hir cuppe ther was no ferthing sene
Of grece whan she dronken hadde hire draugh̄te

fful semyly aftir hir mete she raughte 136
And sikerly sche was of gret' disporte
And ful plesaunt and amable of porte
And peynede hire to counterfete chere
Of court'. and to ben estatliche of' manere 140
And to be holden digne of' reuerence
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And pynnes for to yeue faire wyfes
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His necke white was as the flour delyce
Therto he was strong as a champiou*n*
He knew the tauernes wel in every tou*n* 240
And eueriche Osteller and tapestere
Bet than a lazer or a beggere
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Acordith nouħt as by his faculte 244
To haue with swich seke lazers aqueyntañce
It is nouħt honest / it may nouħt avañce
ffor to delen with swich poraille
But al with riche and sillers of vitaille 248
And oueral ther as profite sholde aryse
Curtays he was and lowely of seruyse
Ther nas no man nowher so vertuous
He was the beste beggere in his hous 252
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. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
ffor þouħ a widewe hadde nouħt a sho
So plesaunt was his Inprincipio
Yet wolde he haue a ferthyng or he wente
His purchace was wel bettere þan his rente 256
And rage he couthe as it were riħt a whelpe
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ffor ther he was not liche a cloistrere
With a thredbare cope as a pore scolere 260
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Of double worstede was his semy cope
That rounded as a belle out of the presse
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In motle and heyħ on horse he satte
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Shewynge alwey the encres of his wynnynge
He wolde the see were kept for any thynge 276
Bitwixe Middelburgħ and Orewelle

Wel coude he in eschange sheldes sellc
This worthy man ful wel his witte bisette
Ther wiste no wight' that' he was in dette 280
So estatly was he of' his gouernañce
With his bargaynes *and with* his cheuyssañce
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That from the tyme of kyng william were falle 324
Therto he cowde endite and make a thyng
Ther couthe no wight pynche at his writyng
And euery statute couthe he pleyne by roote
He rood but homely in a medle coote 328
Gert with a sent of selk wiþ barres smale
Of his array telle I no lenger tale
A ffrankeleyn was in his compaignye
Whit was his berd as is the daieseye 332
Of his complexioun he was sangwyne
Wel louede he by the morewe a soppe in wyne
To lyuen in delite euere was his wone
ffor he was Epiournes owne sone 336
That helde opynyon þat pleyn delite
Was verrey felicite parfite
An houshaldere and that a greet was he
Seint Iulyan he was in his contre 340
His bred his ale was alleweys aftir oon
A bettir envyned man / was nowher noon /
With oute bakemete was neuere his hous [leaf 5, back]
Of fissche and fleisshe *and* þat so plentevous 344
It snewede in his hous of mete and drynke
Of alle deyntethes that men couthe thinke
Aftir the sondry sesons of the yere
So changed he his mete and his sopere 348
fful many a fat partrich̃ hadde he in Mewe

And many a breme *and* many a luce in stewe
Wo was his cook' but' [if] his sauce were
Poynant' and sharp*e* and redy al his gere 352
His table dormant in his halle al way
Stood redy couered al the longe day
At sessioñs ther was he lord and sire
fful often tyme he was knyght' of the shire 356
An anelas and a gypsere al of' silke
Heng' at his girdel white as morne mylke
A sherreff' had he ben / *and* a comptour
Was nowher swich a worthy vauasour 360
AN habirdasshere and a Carpenter
A Webbe. a Diere and a Tapecere
And they were clothid alle in oo lyuere
Of' a solempne and a greet' fraternyte 364
fful fressh and newe here gere apiked was
Here knyfes nere chap[ed] nouht' with bras
But al with syluer wrought ful clene *and* wel
Here gerdelles and her pouches euery del 368
Wel semed ech of' hem a fair burgeys
To sitten in a yeldhalle on a deys
Eueriche for the wisdom that' he can
Was shaply for to bene an Aldirman 372
For cateħ hadde they I-nouħ and Rente
And eke her wifes wolde it' wel assente
And elles certeyn[ly] they were to blame
It' is ful fair to be clepid Madame 376
And gon to vigilies al be fore
And haue a mantel rialliche I-bore
A Cook' they hadde / with hem for the nones
To boille the chikenes with þe maribones 380
And poudre Marchañt' tart' of Gallyngale [leaf 6]
Wel kowde he knowe a drauħt of london ale
He Couthe roste *and* sethe *and* broyle *and* ffrye
Maken Mortrews and wel bake a pye 384
But gret ha[r]m was it' / as it thouhte me

That' on his shene a mormal hadde he
For blank' manger' that made he with the beste
A Shipman was ther / wonyng' fer bi weste 388
For ouñt I woot' he was of' Dertemouthe
He rood vppon a Rouncy as he couthe
In a gowne of' ffaldyng' to the kne
A daggar' hangynge in a lace hadde he 392
Aboute his necke vndir his arme dou*n*
The hote somer hadde made his hiew al brou*n*
And Certeynly he was a good felawe
fful many a drauñt of wyn hadde he drawe 396
ffrom burdeux ward' while the chapmen slepe
Of nyce conscience took' he no kepe
Yif that' he fauñt' / and hadde the heiñere hond'
By watir he sente hem home to euery lond' 400
But of his craft / to rikene wel his tydes
His stremes and his daunger hi*m* bisydes
His herberuñ. his moone *and* his lodmanage
Ther nos noon such from hulle to Cartage 404
Hardy he was / and wys to vndirtake
With many a tempest' had his berd be shake
He knew alle the hauenes as they were
ffro gutlond to the cape de fynystere 408
And euery cryke in bretaygne *and* in Spayne
His barge y-clepid was the maudeleyne
With us ther was a doctour of' ffisik'
In al this world' ne was ther none hy*m* lik' 412
To speke of fisike and of surgerye
ffor he was grounded in astronomye
He kepte his pacient' a ful greet' del
In houres by his magik' naturel 416
Wel couthe he fortune the assendent'
Of' his ymages for his pacient'
He knew the cause of' euery maladye [leaf 6, back]
Were it' of hoot' or cold' or moyst' or drye 420
And wher engendred and [of] what humour

He was a verrey parfit' practisour
The cause I-knowe and of his harm the roote
Anoon he yaf the sike man his boote 424
fful redy hadde he hise apotecaries
To sende hem drugges / and his letuaries
ffor ech of hem made othir for to wy*n*ne
Her frendshipe nas nat newe to bigynne 428
Wel knew he the olde Escalapius
And diascoride and ek' Rufus
Old ypocras Hayly and Galien
Serapion Rasis and Auysen 432
Aueroys Damascien and constantyne
Bernard and Gatisden *and* Gilbertyne
Of' his diete mesurable was he
ffor it was of' no superfluyte 436
Bot of' gret' norshinge and digestable
His studie was but' litel on the bible
In sangweyn and in perce he clad was al
Lyned with Taffata and with sendal 440
And yet he was but esy of' dispense
He kepte that' he wan in pestilence
ffor gold in Phisik' is a cordeal
Therfore he louede gold' in special 444
A Good wiff' ther was of besides bathe
But she was somdel def' and *þat* was scathe
Of cloth makynge sche hadde such an hau*n*t
She passid hem of ypres and of Gaunt 448
In alle the parisch wif' ne was ther noon
That to the offrynge toforn hir shulde goon
And yf ther dide / certeyn wroth was she
That she was out of al[le] charite 452
Hir couerchefes ful fyne were of ground'
I durste swere they weyeden ten pound'
That on a Sonday weren vpon hire hede
Hir hosen weren of' fyne scarlet' rede 456
fful streight I-teied / and shoes ful moist' *and* newe [leaf 7]

Bold was hir face and faire / *and* red of hiewe
She was a worthi wo*m*man al hir lyue
Housbondes atte chirche dore she hadde fyue 460
With outen othir companie in youthe
But ther of' nedith nouht' to speke as nouthe
And thries hadde she bene at Ierusalem
She had[de] passed many a strange strem 464
At Rome sche had ben / *and* at boloyne
In Galice at saint Iame *and* at Coloigne
She koude moche on wandrynge bi the weye
Gat tothid was she sothely for to seie 468
Vp on an Amblere esily she satte
I-wympled wel and on hir heed an hatte
As brood as is a bokellere or a targe
A fot' mantel abouten hire hipes large 472
And on hire feet' a paire of' spores sharpe
In felaschipe wel couthe sche lawhe *and* carpe
Of remedies of loue she kneuh parchau*n*ce
ffor she couthe of' that art the daunce 476
A Good man was there of religiou*n*
And was a pore persou*n* of a tou*n*
But riche he was of' holy thouht *and* werk'
He was also a lerned man *and* a clerk' 480
That Cristes gospel treuly wolde preche
His parisschens deuoutly wolde he teche
Benyngne he was and wondir diligent'
And in aduersite / ful pacient' 484
And swich he was [i]preued ofte sithes
fful looth were hi*m* to cursen for his tythes
But rather wolde he yeuen out' of doute
Vnto his poure parisshens aboute 488
Of his offrynge and of' his substance
He couthe in litil thing' han suffisance
Wide was hise parissho *and* houses fer asondir
But he ne lafte nouthir for rayne ne for thu*n*dir 492
In sikenesse nor in meschief to visite

The ferrest in his parisch myche and lite
Vp on his fete / and in his hond a staff[t] [leaf 7, back]
This noble ensample to his shepe he yaf[t] 496
That[t] ferst[t] he wroughte. and aftirward[d] þat he tauhte
Out[t] of the gospel he þo wordes cauhte
And this figure he addede ek[k] therto
That[t] yf gold ruste / what[t] shal Iren do 500
For if[f] a prest[t] be foul on whom we triste
No wondir is a lewed man to ruste
And shame it is yf[f] a prest take kepe
A shiten sheperde and a clene shepe 504
Wel ouhte a preest ensample for to yeue
By his clennesse hou that[t] his sheep*e* shulde lyue
He set[t] nauht his benefice to hire
And leet[t] his sheep acombred in the myre 508
And ran to london vn to seint Poules
To seke hy*m* a chanterye for soules
Or with a bretherhede to bene with holde
But[t] duelte at[t] home / *and* kepte wel his folde 512
So that[t] the wolf ne made it[t] not[t] myscarye
He was a shepperde *and* not[t] a mercenarie
And thouh he holy were and vertuous
He was nouht[t] to synful men dispitous 516
Ne on his speche daungerous ne digne
But in his techynge discret[t] *and* benygne
To drawen folk[k] to heuene by fairnesse
By good ensample / this was his bisynesse 520
But[t] it[t] were eny person obstynate
What[t] so he were of[f] heigh or lowh estate
Hym wolde he snebbe sharply for the nones
A bettre prest I trowe þat nowher noon es 524
He waitede aftir no pompe *and* reuerence
Ne maked hym a spiced conscience
But cristes lore / *and* hise apostles tuelue
He tauhte / but ferst he folewed in hy*m*selue 528
With hym ther was a plouhman / was his broþir

That' hadde I-lad of dong ful many a fothir
And a trewe swynkere *and* a good was he
Lyvynge in pees / and parfit' charite 532
God loued he best' with al his hole herte [leaf 8]
At' alle tymes ꝑouh̃ he gamed or smerte
And than his neighbure rih̃t as hymselue
He wolde thresshe and therto dike *and* delue 536
For cristes sake / for euery pouere wight
With oute hire / yif hit lay in his myght
Hise tythis payed he ful faire and wel
Bothen of his propre swynke and his catel 540
In a tabbard he rood vp on a mere
Ther was also a Reve and a Mellere
A somenour and a Pardoner also
A Maunciple and my self' ther nar na mo 544
The mellere was a strong' carle for the nones
fful bigge he was / of brawne and ek' of bones
That proued wel / for oueral thare he cam
Atte wrastelynge / he wolde haue a-wey the ram 548
He was short shuldred a thicke knarre
Ther was no dore that he ne wolde heue of barre
Or breke it at' a rennynge with his heed
His berd as any sowe or fox was reed 552
And therto brood as þouh it' were a spade
Vp on the cop right' of his nose he hade
A werte and þeron stood a tuft of' heres
Rede as the brysteles of' a sowes eres 556
His nose þrilles blake were and wyde
A swerd and a bokelere bar he be his side
His mouthe as greet' was as a greet' fourneys
He was a iangelere and a goliardeys 560
And that' was moost' of' synne *and* of' harlotryes
Wel couthe he stele corn / and tolle thryes
And yit' he hadde a thombe of gold parde
A white cote and a blewe hood wered he 564
A bagge-pipe wel couthe he blowe *and* sowne

And þerwith al he brouht' us out' of towne
A Gentil mañciple was þer o[f] a temple
Of' which a catour myghte take ensample 568
ffor to ben wise in biynge of vitaille
ffor whepir þat he payed / or toke by taille
Algate he waitede so in his achate [leaf 8, back]
That he was ay beforn and in good estate 572
Now is not' þat' of god a ful fair grace
That such a lewed mannes wit shal pace
The wysdom of an hepe of lerned men
Of maystres hadde he mo þan thries ten 576
That were of lawe expert' an Curious
Of wich ther was a doseyn in that' hous
Worthy to bene stywardes of Rente *and* lond'
Of any lord that is in Ingelond' 580
To make hym lyue by his propre good'
In honour detteles but' if that' he were wood
Or lyue als skarsly as hy*m* lyst desire
And able for to helpen al a shire 584
In any cas that myhte falle or happe
And yit this Maunciple sette ther althir cappe
The Reue was a sclendre colerik' man
His berd was shaue / as nyhe as euer he can 588
His heer was by hise eres ful rounde yshorne
His toppe was docked like a prest byforne
fful longe were his legges and ful lene
I-like a staf' / ther was no calf' ysene 592
Wel couthe he kepe a Garner or a bynne
Ther was none auditour couthe on hy*m* wy*n*ne
Wel wiste he / by the drought *and* by the reyne
The yeldynge of' his seed / and of' his greyne 596
Hise lordes sheep*e* / hise neete / hise dayerie
His swyne / his hors / his stoor / *and* his pultrye
Was hoolly in this reues gouernynge
And by his covenañt' / yaf' the rekenynge 600
Syn that his lord was twenty yeer of age

Ther couthe no man brynge hym in a-rerage
Ther nas baylyf' ne herde nor othir hyne
That he ne knew his sleighte *and* his covyne 604
They were a-drad of hym / as of the deth
His wonynge was ful faire vpon an hethī
With grene trees / shadewed was his place
He couthe bettre than his lord purchace 608
fful riche he was astored pryuely [leaf 9]
His lorde he couþe wel plese *and* sub[t]ily
To ȝeue and lene him of his owne goode
To haue a þonke and yit' a cote and hode 612
In ȝouþe he had lered a good mistere
He was a wel good wriȝt' a Carpentere
This Reue satte vpon a wel good stot'
That' was al pomel grey *and* highte scot' 616
A longe Surcote of Peers vppon he hadde
And by his side he bare a rusty blade
Of Northfolk was þis Reue of whichī I telle
Besides a toune men clepen it' Baldewelle 620
Tukked he was as is a frere aboute
And euere he rode þe hynderest' of *our* route
A Somno*ur* was ther wiþ vs in that place
That' had a fury cherubynes face 624
ffor Sauseflewme he was wiþ eyen narowe
Als hote he was and leccherous as a sparowe
With scalled browes. blak' and pilled beerde
Of his visage children weren a-ferde 628
Ther nas quyk' siluer' litarge or bremstoñ
Boras orsure no oyle of tartre nōōn
Ne oynement' þat' wold[e] clense *and* byte
That him myght' helpe of his whelkes white 632
Ne of [the] knobbes sitting' in his chekes
Wel loued he garlike. oynyoñs *and* eke lekes
And for to drink strong' wyne rede as blode
Than wolde he speke and cry as he were wode 636
And whan [that] he wel dronken had þe wyne

Than wolde he speke no worde but' latyne
A fewe teermes had he two or thre
That' he had lerned out' of som decree 640
No wonder is he herd' to al þe day
And eke ȝe knowen it' wel how þat a Iay
Can clepe watt' as wel as can þe pope
But' who so couþe in oþer þing' hym grope 644
Than had he spent' al his Philosophie [leaf 9, back]
Ay questio quid iuris wold he crye
He was a gentile harlot' and a kinde
A better felawe shul[de] men not' fynde 648
He wolde suffre for a quarte of wyne
A good felawe to haue his concubyne
A twelue monthē and excuse him ate fulle
fful priuely eke a ffynche couþe he pulle 652
And if he fonde owhere a good felawe
He wolde techen hym to han noon awe
In suchē caas of þe archedekens curs
But' if [a] mannys soule were in his purs 656
ffor in his purs he shuld[e] punshed be
Purs is þe erchedekenes Helle seide he
But' wel I wote he lyed riȝt' in dede
Of cursing' ouȝt' eche gilty man to drede 660
ffor curs wil slee riȝt' as assoyling saueth̄
And also war hym of a significauith̄
In daunger had he at his owne gyse
The yonge Geerles of þe diocise 664
And knowe her counsaile *and* what was al her rede
A Gallonde had he sette vpon his hede
As grete as it were for an ale stake
A Bokelere had he made hym of a Cake 668
With̄ hym þer rode a gentile Pardoner'
Of rouncyuale his frende and his comper'
That' streght' was commen from þe courte of Rome
fful lowde songe he come hider' loue come 672
This somnour bare to hym a stif burdon̄

Was neuere trumpe of half so gret' a souñ
This P*ar*doner had heer as ȝelowe as wexe
But smoth̄ it' henge. as doþ a strike of flexe 676
By ounces henge his lockes þat' he had
And þerwiþ he his shulders ouersprad
But' thyn it lay by culpons oon and oñ
But' hode for Iolite wered he noon 680
ffor it' was trussed vp in his walette [leaf 10]
Hym þouȝt' he rode al of þe newe gette
Discheuele sauf his cap he rode al bare
Suche glaryng' eyen had he as an hare 684
A vernycle had he sewed vpon his cappe
His walet' [lay] biforn him in his lappe
Bret ful of p*ar*doñ co*m*men from Rome al hote
A voyce he had as smal as a[ny] goote 688
No beerde ne had he. ne neu*ere* shuld haue
As smoth̄ it' was as it' were late shaue
I trowe he were a gelding' or a mare
But' of his craft' from Barwik' into ware 692
Ne was þer suche a noþer p*ar*donere
ffor in his male he had a pilowbere
Which̄ þat he seide was oure lady vaile
He seide he had a gobet' of þe saile 696
That' seynt' Peter had whan þat he went'
Vpon þe see to Ih*es*u crist hym hent'
He had a croys of laton ful of stones
And in a glas he had[de] pigges bones 700
But' wiþ þise relikes whan þat' he fonde
A poor[e] person dwellyng' vpon londe
Vpon a day he gate hym more moneye
þan þe the persone gate in Monþes tweye 704
And þus wiþ feyned flateryng *and* Iapes
He made þe Person *and* þe puple his apes
But' trew[e]ly to tellen at' þe laste
He was in chirche a noble eccle*s*iaste 708
Wel couþe he rede a lesson̄ or a storye

But alþerbest he song an offertorie
ffor wel he wist whan þat songe was songe
He moste preche and wel afile his tonge 712
To wynne siluer as he [right] wel cowde
Therfore he songe so merily *and* lowde
Now have I tolld 3ou soþly in a clause
The astaat. þe aray. þe nombre *and* eke þe cause 716
Why þat assembled was þis companye [leaf 10, back]
In Suthwerk at þis gentil hostrye
That hight þe Tabard faste by þe belle
But nowe is tyme to 3ou forto telle 720
Howe þat we beren vs þat ilke nyght
Whan [we] were in þat Hostrie a-light
And after wil I tellen of our viage
And al þe remenaunt of our Pilgrymage 724
But furst I prey 3ou of 3oure curtesie
That 3e ne rette it not my vilanye
þoo þat I pleynly speke in þis matere
To telle 3ou her wordes *and* her chere 728
Ne þou3e he speke her wordes proprely
ffor þis 3e knowen as wel as I
Who so shal telle a tale after a man
He mote reherce as nyghe as euer he can 732
Euericke word if it be in his charge
Al speke he neuere so rudely and large
Or ellis he mote telle his tale vntrewe
Or feyne þinggis or fynde wordes newe 736
He may not spare al þough he were his broþer
He mot also wel say. oo word as another
Crist spak him self ful brode in holy writte
And wel 3e wote no vilanye is itte 740
Eke Plato seiþ who so can hym rede
The wordes mote be cosyn to þe dede
Also I prey 3ou [to] for3eue it me
Al haue I not sette folk in her degre 744
Here in þis tale as þat thei shulde stonde

My witte is short' ȝe may wel vnderstonde
Grete chere made oure hooste vs eu*e*rechoñ
And to þe soper sette he vs anoñ 748
He serued vs witħ vitailles at þe best'
Stronge was þe wyne and wel [to] drink' vs lest'
A semely man our hooste was wiþ alł
ffor to [han] bene a marshal in an hałł 752
A large man he was witħ yen stepe [leaf 11]
A fairer Burges is [ther] none in chepe
Bold of his speche. and wise *and* wel ytauȝt
And of manhode hy*m* lacked[e] right' naught' 756
Eke þerto he was right' a mery man
And after sopere pleyen he bygan
And spak of myrtħ amonge oþer þinges
Whan that' we had[de] made our rekenyngges 760
And seide þus. now lordingges trewly
ȝe bene to me welcome riȝt' hertely
ffor be my trouþe if þat' I shal not lye
I seegħ not' þis ȝere so mery a companye 764
At' ones in þis harborowe as is nowe
ffayne wold I do ȝou merthe wist' I howe
And of a merþe I am right' now by-þought'
To doñ ȝou ease and it shal coste nouȝt 768
Ȝe gone to canterbery god ȝou spede
þe blisful martir'. quite ȝou ȝour' mede
And wel I wote. as ȝe goon by þe way
ȝe shapen ȝou to talen and to pley 772
ffor trewly conforte ne myrthe is nōn
To riden by þe wey dombe as a stone
And þerfor wil I. make ȝou disporte
As I seide erste and don ȝou som conforte 776
And if ȝou likeþ alle by oon assente
[Now] fforto stonden at my Iuggemente
And forto worchen as I shal ȝou seie
To morowe whan ȝe riden by þe weie 780
Now be my faders soule þat' is dede

But' ȝe be mery. I wil ȝeue ȝou my hede
Holde vp ȝoure hondes wiþ out' more speche
Our counsaile was not longe for to seche 784
Vs þouȝt' it was not / worþe to make to wis
And graunted hym wiþ oute more avis
And bad him scie his veredit as him lest'
Lordingges quod he nowe herkeneþ for þe best' 788
But' take it' not' I prei ȝou in disdeyne [leaf 11, back]
This is þe point' to speke short' and pleyne
That' eche of ȝou to shorte wiþ our waye
In þis viage shal telle tailles twaye 792
To Caunterbery ward' I mene it so
And homwardes he shal telle o*þere* twoo
Of auentures þat' han whilom bifalle
And which̄ of ȝou þat' bereþ hy*m* best' of alle 796
þat' is to sey þat' telleþ in þis cas
Tales of best' sentence and most' solas
shal haue a sopere at' our alder cost'
Her in þis place sitting' by þis post' 800
Whan þat' we co*mm*en ageyn from Canterburye
And forto make ȝou þe more merye
I wil my seluen goodly wiþ ȝou ride
Right' at myne owne cost' and be ȝour' gide 804
And who so wil my Iugement' wiþseye
Shal pay al þat' we spenden by þe weye
And if ȝe vouche sauf þat' it' be so
Telle me anoon wiþ outen wordes moo 808
And I wil̄ erly shape me þerfore
þis þinge was graunted and our oþes swore
Wiþ ful glad hert' and preien hy*m* also
þat' he wolde vouchesauf so to do 812
And þat' he wolde be our gouernour'
And of our tales Iugge and roportour'
And sette a sopere at' a certeyn price
And we wold rewled bene at his deuice 816
In heghe and lough and þus by on assent'

We bene accorded to þe Iuggement
And þer vpon þe wyne was fette anon
We dronken and to reste wente echoñ 820
Wiþ oute eny lenger tariynge
On morowe whan þe day [bi]gan to sprynge
Vp roos oure hooste and was oure alder Cok
And gadered vs to gidere in a flok. 824
And forþ we riden a litel more þan paas [leaf 12]
Vnto þe watering of Seynt Thomas
And þer our hooste gan his hors areste
And seide lordes harkeneþ if yow leste 828
ȝe wote ȝoure forward and I it ȝou record
If euensonge and morowsonge accord
Lat see nowe who. shal telle þe first tale
As euer mote I drink*e* wyne or ale 832
Who so be rebell to my Iuggement
Shal paye for al þat by þe way is spent
Now draweþ Cut er þat we ferþ*er* twynne
Which þat haþ þe shortest shal bygynne 836
¶ Sir knyght quod he my maister and my lorde
Now droweþ Cutte for þat is myn accorde
Co*m*meth nere q*uo*d he my lady prioresse
And ȝe sir Clerk lat be ȝoure shamfastnesse 840
Ne stodieth nouȝt lay honde to euery man
Anoñ to drawe every wight bygan
And shortely forto tellen as it was
Were it be auenture or sort or cas 844
The soþe is þis þe Cut fille to þe knyȝt
Of which full glad and bliþe was euery wiȝt
And tellen he most his tale as it was resoñ
By forward and by compo[si]cioñ 848
As ȝe han herde what needet wordes moo
And whan þis good man seegh̃ þat it was soo
As he þat wise was and obedient
To kepen his forward by his fre assent 852
He seide siþen I shal bygynne þe game

What' welcome be þe Cutte a goddis name
Now lat' vs ride *and* harkeneþ what I saye
And wiþ þat' word' we riden forþ our waye 856
And [he] byganne wiþ riȝt a mery chere
His tale anoñ and seide as ȝe may here

¶ **Iam que domos patrias scithice post aspera gentis: Prelia laurigero &c. Thus endeþ þe Prologe of þis Boke.**

¶ ffabula militis. **Here bygynneþ the knyghtes tale.**

Whilom was / as olde stories tellen vs [leaf 12, back]
A worþi duk' hight' theseus 860
Of Athenes he was lord *and* gouernour
And in his tyme suche a Conquerour'
That gretter was [ther] noon vnder þe sunne
fful many a riche contre had he wonne 864
What' wiþ his wisdom and his chyualrye
He conquered al þe regne of femynye
That' whilom was ycleped Sithia
And wedded[e] þe quene ypolita 868
And brouȝt' her home wiþ hym to his cuntre
Whith̄ moch̄ glorie and gret' solempnite
And eke her ȝenge suster Emelie
And þus with̄ victorie and with̄ melodye 872
Lat I þis noble Duke to Athenes ride
And al his hooste in armes hym beside
And certes if it' nere to longe to here
I wold' haue tolde fully þe manere 876
Howe wonnen was þe Reaume of ffemyny
By Theseus and by his Chiualrye
And of þe grete bataille for þe nones
Bytwyxen Athenes and amazones 880
And howe asseged was ypolita
The faire ladye qune of Scithia
And of þe feest' þat' was at her weddinge
And of þe tempest' at her home commynge 884
But' al þat' þing' I mot' as nowe forbere
I haue god wote a large feelde to ere
And weike bene þe oxen in my plough̄
The remenaunte of þe tale is long ynogh̄ 888
I wil not' letten eke noon of þis route

Lat' euery felawe telle his tale aboute
And lat se nowe who shal þe soper wynne
And þer I lafte: I wil a3ein bygynne [*A break in the MS. with*] Incipit' narracio plena Militis.
This Duk of whom I make mencioun [leaf 13]
Whan he was commen almost' to þe toun
In al his wele and his most Pride
He was war as he cast' his eyen atside 896
Where þat' þer kneled in þe highe waye
A companye of ladys twey and tweye
Eche after oþer clad in cloþes blake
But' suche a crye and such a woo þei make 900
That' in þis worlde [n]is creature lyuynge
That' herde suche a-noþer wamentinge
And of þis crie þei nolde neuere stynte
Til þei þe Reynes of his bridel hente 904
What' folk bene 3e þat' at' myn home commynge
Pertourben so my feest[e] wiþ criynge
Quod Theseus haue 3e so grete envie
Of myn honour þat þus compleyn and crye 908
Or who haþ 3ou mysdone or offended
Telleþ me if it' may be amendet'
And whi þat' 3e bene cloped þus in blak
The eldest lady of hem al[le] spak 912
Whan she had swowned wiþ a dedly chere
þat' it' was rauthe forto sene and here
She seide lord' to whom fortune haþ 3euen
Victorie and as a conqueror to lyuen 916
Nat' greueþ vs 3oure glory and 3our honour
But' we biseke mercy *and* socour
Haue mercy on our woo and *our* distresse
Some drope of Pite þorgh þi gentelnesse 920
Vpon vs wrecched wommen lat' nowe falle
ffor certes lord' þer is noon of vs alle
That' she ne haþ bene a doches or a quene
Nowe bene we Catyues as it' is wel sene 924
Thonked be fortune and her fals[e] qwhele

þat noon estate ensureþ forto bene wele
Now certes lord to abide ȝour presence
Here in þis temple of þe goddes clemence 928
We han be wayting al þis fourt[e]nyȝt [leaf 13, back]
Helpe[þ] vs lord siþ it is in þi myght
I wrecche whicĥ þat wepe *and* weile þus
Whilom was wif to king Cappaneus 932
That starfe at Thebes cursed be þ*a*t day
And alle we þat bene in þis araye
And maken al þis lamentacio*u*n
We losten alle our husbondes at þ*a*t to*u*n 936
While þat þe assege þer about*e* lay
And ȝit nowe þe olde Creon weillaway
That lord is nowe of Thebes Cite
ffulfilled of yre and of iniquite 940
He for despite and for his tyrannye
To doon þe dede bodys vilenye
Of al our lordes whicĥ þat ben*e* sclawe
Haþ al þe bodies on an hepe ydrawe 944
And wol not suffre hem by noñ assent
Neiþere to bene yburied neiþer brent
But makeþ houndes ete hem in despit
And wiþ þat word w*ith*outen more respit 948
þei fillen a Gruf and criden pitously
Haue on vs wrecched women som mercy
And lat oure sorowe synken in þi hert
¶ This gentel duke doune from his courser stert 952
Wiþ hert*e* pitous whan he herde he*m* speke
Him þouȝ*t*e þat his hert wold alto-breke
Whan he seegĥ hem so pitous *and* so mate
þat whilom were[n] of so grete astate 956
And in his armes he hem alle vp hente
And hem conforteþ in ful good entente
And swore his oþe as he was trewe knyȝt
He wold*e* done so ferforþly his myȝt 960
Vppon the Tirant Creon hem to wreke

þat alle þe puple of Grece shuld speke
How Creon was of Theseus yserued
As he þat had his deþ ful wel deserued 964
And right anoñ *with*outen more abode [leaf 14]
His baner he displeied and forþ rode
To Thebes ward and al his hooste beside
No ner Athenes wold he goo ne ride 968
Ne take his case fulli half a day
But onward on his way þat nyȝt he lay
And sent anoon ypolita the quene
And Emelye hir yonge sustre Shene 972
Vnto þe toune of Athenes to dwelle
And forþe he ritte þer is no more to telle
The rede statue of Mars wiþ spere *and* targe
So shyneþ in his white baner large 976
þat alle the feeldes glyteren vp *and* do*u*n
And by his baner born is hys pynyo*u*n
Of gold ful riche in whicñ þer was ybete
þe Mynataur which þat he wan in Crete 980
Thus riȝt þis duk. thus riȝt þis conq*ue*rour
And in his ooste of Chyualrye þe flour
Til þat he come to Thebes and alight
ffaire in a felde þer as he þouȝt to fiȝt 984
But shortely forto speken of þis þing
Witñ Creon whiche þat was of Thebes king
He faught and sclowgh him manly as a knyght
In pleyn bataille and put þe folk to flight 988
And by asseut he wan the Cite after
And rent ado*u*n boþ walle sp*are* and rafter
And to þe ladies he restored ageyñ
þe bones of her frendes þat were scleyñ 992
To done obsequies as was þe gyse
But it were al to longe forto devise
The grete clamour and þe wamentynge
þat þe ladies made at þe brennynge 996
Of þe bodies and þe grete honour

That theseus þe noble conquerour
Doþ to þe bodies whan þei ffrom hy*m* went
But shortely to telle is myn entent 1000
Whan þat þis worþi Duke þis theseus [leaf 14, back]
Haþ Creon sclayn and wonne Thebes þus
Stille in þat felde he toke al nyȝt his rest
And did wiþ al þe contre as hym lest 1004
To Ransake in þe caas of þe bodies dede
Hem for to stripe of harneyes and of wede
The pilours dyden bysynesse *and* Cure
Aftere þe bataille and þe discomfiture 1008
And so bifelle þat in þe caas þei founde
þorgh girt wiþ many a greuous blody wounde
Two yonge knyghtes ligging by and by
Bothen in armes same wrouȝt ful richelie 1012
Of whiche two Arcita hight that oon
And þat o*þere* knyȝt hight Palamon
Not fully quyk ne fully dede þei were
But by her cote armours *and* by her gere 1016
The herowdes knewe hem self in special
As þei þat were[n] of þe blood Riall
Of Thebes. and of sustren two yborn
Out of þe caas þe Pilours han hem torn 1020
And han hem caried soft vnto þe tent
Of Theseus and he ful sone hem sent
To Athenes to dwellen in Prison
P*er*petuelly hem nolde he not raunson 1024
And whan this worþi Duke haþ þus ydon
He toke his ooste and home he ritte anon
Wiþ laurere corowned as a conquerour
And þer he lyueþ in Ioie and in honour 1028
Teerme of his lif. what nedeþ wordes moo
And in a toure in anguissh *and* in woo
Dwellen þis Palamon and eke arcite
ffor euermore þer may no gold hem quyte 1032
This passeþ yere by yere *and* day by day

Till it' fille onys in a morowe of May
That Emely þat' fairer was to sene
Than is þe lyle vpon his stalke grene 1036
And fressher þan þe may wiþ floures newe [leaf 15]
ffor wiþ þe roos colour strof hir hwe
I not' whicħ was þe fairer of hem twoo
Er it' were day as was her wone to doo 1040
She was a-risen and al a redy dight
ffor May wil haue no seloggardy on nyȝt'
The seson pricketh euery gentile hert'
And makeþ hit' out' of his slepe to stert' 1044
And sithen arise and doo May obseru*aun*ce
This makeþ Emely to haue remembrau*n*ce
To doñ honour to May and forto rise
Yclo*þ*ed was she fressħ forto devise 1048
¶ Her ȝelowe heer was breided in a tresse
Behynde her bak. a ȝeerd*e* longe y gesse
And in þe gardyne at' sonne vprist'
She walkeþ vp and doun and as her list' 1052
She gadereþ floures p*ar*tie white *and* rede
To make a subtile garlonde for her hede
And as an aungel heuenly she songe
The grete toure þat was so þikke *and* stronge 1056
Whicħ of þe castel was þe chief dongeon
There as þe knyghtes weren in p*ri*soñ
Of whicħ I tolke ȝowe and telle shaħt
Was euene Ioynant' to þe gardyñ waħt 1060
Ther as þis Emely had her pleying'
Briȝt' was þe sonne and cleer in þat mornyng'
And palamon þis woful prisone*re*
As was his wo*nn*e by lieue of his Gaillere 1064
Was rysen and romed in a chamber on higħ
In whicħ he al þe noble Cite segħ
And eke þe gardyne ful of braunches grene
Ther as þe fressħ emelye þe shene 1068
Was in her walk and romed vp *and* do*u*n

This soriful prisoner þis Palamoun
Goþ in þe Chambre romyng to and froo
And to him self complcynyng of his woo 1072
That' he was born ful ofte seide allas [leaf 15, back]
And so byfelle by auenture or caas
That þorowe a wyndowe þikke of mony a barre
Of yren grete and square as eny sparre 1076
He cast' his eyen vpon Emelia
A[nd] þerwiþ al he bleynte and cried A
As þouȝe he stongen were vnto þe hert'
And wiþ þat crie Arcyte anoñ vp stert' 1080
And seide Cosyn myne what' eileþ þe
That' art' so pale and dedly on to see
Whi cridest' þowe who haþ þe doñ offence
ffor goddis loue. take al in pacience 1084
Our' prisoñ for it' may noon other be
ffortune hath ȝeue vs þis aduersite
Som wikke aspecte or disposicion
Of Saturne by som constellacion 1088
Haþ ȝeuen by þis al þouȝe he had hit' sworñ
So stode þe heuene whan þat' we were borñ
We mote endure it þis is short' *and* playn)
This Palamon answerd' and seide agayñ 1092
Cosyn forsoþ of þis opynyoñ
Thow hast' a veyn ymagynacioñ
This prison caused me not' [for] to crie
But I was hirt riȝt' nowe þorgh̃ out' myn ye 1096
Into myn hert' þat' wil my bane be
The fairnesse of þat' lady þat' I see
ȝonde in þe gardyne romyng' to and fro
Is cause of al my criyng and my woo / 1100
I not' where she be wo*m*man or goddesse
But Venus is it soþly as I gesse
And þerwiþal on knees do*u*n he fille
And seide Venus if it be þi wille 1104
ȝowe in þis gardyne þus to t*ra*nsfigure

Bifore me soriful wrecched creature
Out' of þis Prison helpe þat' we mowe scape
And if so be my destany be shape 1108
By eterne worde to dyen in p*ri*sonn̄ [leaf 16]
Of oure lynage haue som c*om*passion
That is so lowe ybrouȝt' by tyrannye
And wiþ þat' word arcite gan aspie 1112
Where as þis lady romed to and froo
And wiþ þat' siȝt' her bewte hurte hy*m* soo
þat' if þat' Palamon was wounded sore
Arcite is hurte as moche as he or more 1116
And wiþ a sighe he seide pitously
þe fresh*e* bewte sleeþ me sodeynly
Of hur' þat' romeþ in ȝonder place
And but' if I haue her mercy and her grace 1120
þat' I may seen hir' atte leest*e* way
I ne am but' dede þer nys no more to say
This Palamon whan he þise wordes herde
Dispitously he loked and answerde 1124
Wheder seist' þou þis in ernest or in pleye
Nay quod Arcite in ernest' be my feye
God helpe me so me lest' ful euel play
This Palamon gan knytte his browes tway 1128
It were to the quod he no gret' honour'
ffor to be fals ne for to be traito*ur*
To me þat am þi Cosyn *and* þi broþer
Isworne ful depe and eche of vs to oþer 1132
That' neuere for to dyen in þe peyn̄
Til þat' þe deþe departe shal vs tweyn̄
Neiþer in loue to hynder oþer'
Ne in noon oþer caas my lief broþer' 1136
But' þat' þou shuldest trewly ferþermore
In euery caas and I shal forther þe þore
þis was þine othe and myn also certeyn̄
I wote riȝt' wele þow darst it not wiþseyn̄ 1140
Thus art þow of my counsel out of doute

And nowe þou woldest falsly ben aboute
To loue my lady whom I loue *and* serue
And euer shal to þat' myn herte sterue 1144
Now certes fals Arcite þow shalt' not' so [leaf 16, back]
I loued her first' and tolde þe my woo
As to my counsaile and my broþer swōrn
To forþere me as I haue tolde bifōrn 1148
ffor which þow art' ybounden as a knyght'
To helpe me if it' lay in þi myght'
Or ellis art' þou fals I dar wel sayn
This arcite ful prudently spak agayn 1152
Thow shalt' q*uo*d he be raþer fals þan I
But' þou art' fals I telle þe witterly
ffor p*ar*amour I loued her first þan þou
What' wilt' þow seyn. þou wist' it' not' ȝit nowe 1156
Whedere she be a wo*m*man or goddes
Thyne is affeccioñ of holynes
And myne is loue as to a creature
ffor which I tolde þe myñ auenture 1160
As to my cosyn and to my broþ*er*e sworñ
I pose þat' þou louedest' hur' biforñ
Woost' þow not' wel þe olde clerkes sawe
þat who shal ȝeue a louer eny lawe ¶ Quis legem dat amantibus
Loue is a gretter lawe by my pan
þan may be ȝeue to eny erþely man
And þerfor positif lawe and swich decree
Is broke al day for loue in eche degre 1168
A man mote nedes loue mawgre his hede
He may not' fleen it'! þouȝe he shuld be dede
Al be she mayde or widowe or ellis wif
And eke it is not' likly al þi liff 1172
To stonden in her grace no more shal I
ffor wel þou woost þi self[e] v*er*rely
þat þou and I bene dampned to pr*is*oñ
P*er*petuelly vs geyneth no raunsoñ 1176
We stryuen as [did] houndes for þe boon

þei foughten alday and ȝit' her parte was noñ
þere come a kite while þ*a*t þei were so wrothñ
þat bare away þe boon bitwene he*m* bothñ 1180
Ak þ*er*fore at þe kingges courte my brother' [leaf 17]
Eche man for him self þer is noon oþer'
Loue if þe list. for I loue and ay shal
And soþly leue broþer þis is allt 1184
Here in þis prison mote we endure
And euerichñ of vs take his auenture
Grete was þe strif and longe bytwix hem tweye
If þat' I had leisere for to seye 1188
But to þis effect I[t] hapned on a day
To tellen yowe as soþly as I may
A worþi duc' þat' hight' P*e*rotheus
þat' ffelawe was vnto duc Theseus 1192
Siþ þilk day þat' þei weren children lite
Was co*m*men to Athenes his felawe to visite
And forto pley as he was wont' to doo
ffor in þis worlde he loued no man soo 1196
And he loued him also tenderly ageyn
So wel þei loued as olde bokes seyn /
That' whan þat oon was dede soþly to telle
His felowe went' and souȝt him do*u*n in helle 1200
But of þat storie list' me not' to write
Duc' P*e*rotheus loued wel arcite
And had him knowe at Thebes yere by yere
And fynaly at' þe request' and preiere 1204
Of P*e*rotheus wiþ out' ony raunsoñ
Duc' theseus him lete out' of Prisoñ
ffrely to goon wher þat' him list ou*e*ral
In suche a gise as I you telle shallt 1208
This was þe forward' pleynly for to endite
Bitwene Theseus and hym iercite
That' if so were þat' arcite were founde
Euer in his lif be day or nyȝt or stounde 1212
In eny cuntre of this theseus

And he were kaught' it was acorded þus
That' wiþ a swerde he shuld lese his hede
þer nas non oþer remedye ne rede 1216
But takeþ his leue and homward he hym spedde [leaf 17, back]
Lat' hym be war his nek lith to wedde
How grete a sorowe suffreþ nowe arcite
The detħ he feleþ þorgħ his herte smyte 1220
He wepeþ *and* weileþ and crieþ pitously
To sleen hym self he waiteth priuely
He saide Allas þat day þat I was borñ
Now is my prisoñ wors than [was] beforñ 1224
Nowe is me shape eternaly to dwelle
Nouȝt' in purgotorye. but' in helle
Allas þat' euere I knewe Perotheus
ffor ellis had I ydwelled with theseus 1228
Yfetered in his prison euermoo
Than had I bene in blisse and not' in woo
Only þe sight' of her' whom þat I serue
Thoow þat I neuere hir' grace may deserue 1232
Wold haue ysuffised right ynowe for me
Oo dere Cosyn Palamon quod he
Thine is þe victorie of þis auenture
fful blisfully in prison myȝt' þou dure 1236
In prison certes nay but paradis
Wel hatħ fortune turned þe the dys
þat hast þe sight' of hur' and I þe absence
ffor possible is siþ þou hast her presence 1240
And art' a knyght an worþi and an able
That by som caas siþ fortune is chaungeable
Thowe maiste to þi desire somtyme atteyñ
But' I þat' am exiled and bareyñ 1244
Of al[le] grace and in so gret' despeir'
That þer nys erþe water' fuyr' ne eire
Ne creature þat' of hem maked is
þat' may me helpe or done comfort in þis 1248
Wel ouȝte I sterue in wanhope and distresse

ffare wele my lif' my lust and my gladnesse
Allas whi pleynen men so in comune
Of p*ur*ueaunce of god and of fortune 1252
That' ȝeueþ hem ful oft' in mony a gyse [leaf 18]
Wel bet[ter] þan þei can hem self devise
Som man desireþ forto haue ricchesse
That' cause is of his mordere and gret' siknesse 1256
And som man wolde out' of his prisoñ fayñ
That' in his hous is of his mayne sclayñ
Infinite harmes bene in þis matiere
We wote not what' þinge þ*at* we preien here 1260
We faren as he þat' dronken is as mous
A dronken man wote wele he haþ an hous
But he ne woote whicħ þe riȝt way is þidere
And to a dronken man þe way is sclydere 1264
And certes in þis world so faren wee
We sechen fast' aftere felicite
But' we goon wronge ful oft' trewly
Thus may we seie alle and namelicħ I 1268
That wende and had a grete opynyoñ
That if I myȝte skapen from p*ri*soñ
þan had I be in Ioie and p*ar*fite hele
þer nowe I am exiled fro my wele 1272
Siþ þat I may not' seen ȝou Emelye
I am but dede þer nys no remedye
Vppon þat oþer side Palamon
Whan þat he wist' þat' arcite was agoñ 1276
Swicħ sorowe he makeþ þat þe grete tour
Resouneþ of his ȝellinge *and* clamour
The pure fettres of his shynes grete
Were of his bitter salte teeres wete 1280
Allas quod he Arcita cosyn myne
Of al our strif god wote þe fruyte is þine
Thow walkest now in Thebes at þi large
And of my woo. þou ȝeuest litel charge 1284
Thow maist siþ þou hast wisdom *and* manhede

Assemble alle þe folk of our kinrede
And make a werre so sharpe on þis Cite
þat by som auenture or som trete 1288
Thow maist haue hir to lady and to wiff [leaf 18, back]
ffor whom þat I most nedes lese my liff
ffor as by way of possibilite
Siþ þou art at þi large of prison free 1292
And art a lorde grete is þine au*au*ntage
More þan is myne þat sterue here in a kage
ffor I mote wepe and weile while þ*a*t I lyue
Wiþ al þe woo þat prison may me ȝeue 1296
And eke wiþ peyn þat loue me ȝeueþ also
þat doubleþ al my torment and my woo
þer wiþ þe fire of gelesie vpsterte
Wiþ in his brest and hente hy*m* by þe herte 1300
So woodly þat he like was to biholde
The box-tre or þe asshen dede and colde
That seide he .o. cruel goddes þat gouerne
This world wiþ byndinge of ȝoure worde eterne 1304
And writen in þe table of Athamaunt
ȝoure p*ar*lement and ȝoure eterne g*ra*unt
What is mankinde more vnto ȝou holde
þan is the shepe þat roukeþ in þe folde 1308
ffor sclayn is man riȝt as an oþer beest
And dwelleþ eke in p*ri*son and in arest.
And haþ siknesse and grete aduersite
And oft tymes giltlees parde 1312
What gouern*au*nce is in þis prescience
That giltlees tormenteþ Innocence
And encreseþ þis al my penaunce
þat man is bounden to his obseru*au*nce 1316
ffor goddes sake to letten of his wille
Ther as a beest may al his list fulfille
And whan a beest is dede he hath no peyn
But aftere his deth man mote wepe and pleyn 1320
Thoghñ in þis world he haue care *and* woo

Wiþ outen doute it' may stonden soo
The answere of þis lete I to dyuynes
But' wel I wote þat' in þis world' gret' pyne es 1324
¶ Allas I se a serpent' or a theef' [leaf 19]
þat mony an trewe man haþ done meschief'
Goon at' his large and where hym list may *tur*'ne
But I mote bene in p*ri*soñ þorgh̄ Saturne 1328
And eke þorghe Iuno Ialous and eke wode
þat haþ destroied wel nygh̄ al þe blode
Of Thebes wiþ his waaste walles wide
And Venus sleeþ me on þat' oþer side 1332
ffor Ialousy and fere of him Arcite
Now wil I stinte of Palamon a lite
And lat' hym in his prison still*e* dwelle
And of Arcite forþ I wil ȝowe telle 1336
The somer passeþ and þe nyȝtes longe
Encresceþ double wise. þe peynes stronge
Boþen of þe louer and of þe prisoner'
I not' whiche haþ þe woofuller' myster' 1340
ffor shortely for to seyn of þis Palamōn
P*er*petuelly is dampned to p*ri*soñ
In cheynes and [in] fettres to þe dede
And Arcite is exiled vp[on] is hede 1344
ffor euermore as out' of þat' cuntre
Ne neuere ne shal his lady see
¶ ȝow louyers aske I now þis questiōn
Who haþ þe wors Arcite or Palamōn 1348
That' oon may se his lady day by day
But in Prison mot he dwelle alway
That' oþer wher hy*m* list' may ride *and* goo
But' seen his lady shal he neuer moo 1352
Now devyneþ as ȝou list' þat ȝe can
ffor I wil telle forþ as I byganne

¶ Whan þat Arcite to Thebes co*mm*en was
fful often a daie he swelt' and seide alas 1356
ffor seen his lady shal he neu*er*e moo
And shortely to concluden all his woo
So mykel sorowe had neu*er*e creature
þat is or shal while þat' þe world' may dure 1360
¶ His slepe his mete. his drink is hym byraft' [leaf 19, back]
þat' lene he wexeþ and drye as is a shaft'
His eyen holowe and grisly to biholde
His hwe falowe *and* pale as asshen colde 1364
And solitarye he was and euer allon*e*
And waillin*g*e al þe nyȝt' making his mon*e*
And if he herde songe or instrument
Than wolde he wepe he myȝt' not' stent' 1368
So feble eke were his spirites / and he lowe
And chaunged so þat' no man can knowe
His speche neiþer his voys þouȝe men it herde
And in his gere for al þe worlde he ferde 1372
Not' comly liche to louers maladye
Of heres but' rather like manye
Engendred of humour malancolike
Byforn his celle fantastike 1376
And shortely turned was al vp and do*un*
Both habite and disposicio*un*
Of him þis wooful louer' Daine[1] Arcite [1 *or* Dame]
What' shuld' I alday of his woo endite 1380
Whan he endured had a ȝere or two
This cruel torment *and* þis peyn *and* woo
At Thebes in his courte as I seide
Vpon a nyght' in slepe as he hy*m* leide 1384
Hym þouȝt' howe þat the wenged god Mercurye
Biforn him stode and bad hy*m* to be merye
His slepy yeerde in honde he bare vpriȝt'
An hatte he wered vpon his heres briȝt' 1388

Araied was þis god as he toke kepe
As he was whan þat Argus toke his slepe
And seide him þus to Athenes shalt þou wende
Ther is þe shapen of þi woo an ende 1392
And wiþ þat' worde Arcite woke *and* stert
Nowe trewly howe sore þat euer me smert
Quod he to Athenes nowe wil I fare
Ne for þe drede of deþe shal I not spare 1396
To see my lady þat' I loue and serue [leaf 20]
In her presence I ne recche þoughh̄ I sterue
And wiþ þat' word he kaught' a grete myro*ur*
And seeghh̄ þat chaunged was al his colo*ur* 1400
And seeghh̄ his visage al in anoþer kinde
And right' anoñ it' ranne him in his mynde
That siþen his face was so disfigured
Of malady þe whichh̄ he had endured 1404
He myghte wel if þat' he bare hy*m* lowe
Lyue in Athenes euermore vnknowe
And seen his lady wel nye day be day
And right' anon he chaunged his aray 1408
And clad him as a poor labore[er]
And [al] alon sauf oonly a sqwiere
That' knewe his priuete *and* al his caas
Whiche was disgised poorly as he waas 1412
To Athenes is he gon þe nexte way
And to þe courte he went' vpon a day
And at þe gate he profered his seruyse
To drugge and drawe what' so men wil deuise 1416
And shortely of þis mater forto seyñ
He felle in office wiþ a chamberleyñ
The whiche þat was dwelling' wiþ Emelye
ffor he was wise and sone couþe aspye 1420
Of euery seru*aun*te whichh̄ þ*at* serueþ here
Wel couþe he hewen wode and water' bere
ffor he was yonge and myghty for þe nonys
And þerto he was stronge and bigge of bonys 1424

To done þat eny wiȝt' him can deuise
A ȝeer or two he was in þis seruyse
Page in þe Chambre of Emely þe briȝt
And Philostrate he seide þat he hiȝt' 1428
But' half so wel biloued a man as he
Ne was þer neuer in courte of his degre
He was [so] gentil of Condicio*un*
þat' þorowe out al þe court' was his reno*un* 1432
Thei seide þat' it' was a charite [leaf 20, back]
That' theseus wolde enhaunce his degre
And putten hy*m* in worshipful seruyse
þer as he myght' his vertue ex*er*cise 1436
And þus wiþ in a while his name is spronge
Bothen of his dedes and of his good tonge
That' Theseus haþ taken hym so nere
þat of his chambere he made hy*m* a squyer*e* 1440
And ȝaue him gold to meyntene his degre
And eke men brouȝt' hy*m* out' of his cuntre
ffro ȝere to ȝere ful priuely his rente
But' honestly and sleiȝly he it' spente 1444
That' no man wondred. how þat' he it hadde
And thre ȝere in þis wise his lif he ladde
And bare hym so in pees and eke in werre
þer is no man þat' Theseus hath derre 1448
And in þis blisse lete I nowe Arcite
And speke I wil of Palamon a lite
¶ In derknesse in horrible and strong' prisoñ
This vij. ȝere hath sitten Palamon 1452
ffor-pyned what' for woo *and* for distresse
Who feleth double soor and hevynesse
But Palamon þat' loue destreyneþ so
That' wode out' of his wit' he goþ for woo 1456
And eke þerto he is a p*ri*sonere
P*er*petuelly not' oonly for a ȝere
Who cowde ryme in englissh p*ro*prely
His martierdome for soþ it am not' I 1460

Therfor I passe as liȝtly as I may
¶ It felle þat' in þe vij. ȝere of May
The .iij. nyght' as olde bokes seyn̄
þat' al þis story telleþ more pleyn̄ 1464
Were it by auenture or be destynye
As whan a þing' is shape it' shal be
That sone aftere the mydnyȝt' Palamon̄
By helpinge of a frende brak p*ri*son̄ 1468
And fleeþ þe Cite fast' as he may goo / [leaf 21
ffor he had ȝeue his gaylere drink so
Of a Clerrey made of a certeyn wyne
Wiþ vercotiks and opy of Thebes fyne 1472
þat' al þat' nyȝt' þough þat men wold' hym shake
þe Gailler sclepte and myȝte not' awake
¶ And þus he fleeþ as fast as euer he may
þe nyȝt' was short' and fast[e] by þe day 1476
þat' nedes cost' he most' him self hiden
And til a groue faste ther besiden
Wiþ dredful foote þan stalkeþ Palamon̄
ffor shortely þis was his opynyon̄ 1480
That' in þat' groue he wolde hym hide alday
And in þe nyght' þan wolde he take his way
To Thebes ward' his frendes forto prey
On theseus to helpe hym to werrey 1484
A[nd] shortely eiþer he wold lese his liff'
Or wynnen Emely to his louely wiff'
This is þeffeste and his entente pleyn̄
¶ Nowe wil I turne vnto Arcite ageyn̄ 1488
That' litel wist' howe negh̄ þat' was his care
Til þat' fortune had kauȝt' hy*m* in his snare
The bysy larke massagere of day
Saluеþ in her songe þe morowe gray 1492
And ffiry Phebus riseþ vp so briȝt
þat' al þe Orient laughetn̄ of his siȝt'
And wiþ his stremes drieþ in þe greues /
The siluer dropes honging' in þe leues 1496

¶ And Arcita þat' in þe courte Royall
With Theseus his squyer' pryncipall
Is risen and lokeþ on þe mery day
And forto don his obseru*aun*ce to Maij 1500
Remembring' þe point' of his desire
He on his coursere sterting' as þe fire
Is riden into þe feeldes him to pley
Out' of þe courte were it' a myle or twey 1504
And to þe Groue of which þ*at* I ȝou tolde [leaf 21, back]
By auenture his way by-gon to holde
And maken hym a garlond' of þe greues
Were it' of wodbynde or hawthorn leues 1508
And loude he songe aȝeinst þe sonne shene
May wiþ all þi floures and þi grene
Welcome be þowe faire fresh*e* May
I hope þat I som*me* grene gete may 1512
And from his courser wiþ a lusty herte
Into þe Groue ful hastely he sterte
And in a path he romeþ vp *and* do*un*
þer as by auenture of þis Palamo*un* 1516
Was in a busshe þat no man myȝt' hym see
ffor soor afferd' of his deþ was he
¶ No þinge ne knewe he þat' it was Arcyte
God wote he wold' haue trowed it ful lite 1520
But' soþ is seide goon sithen mony ȝeres
That' feelde hath yen *and* þe wode haþ eeres
It' is ful faire a man to bere hym euene
ffor alday meten men at' vnsef' steuene 1524
fful litel wote Arcite of his felawe
þat' was so nygh to harken of his sawe
ffor in þe busshe he sitteþ now ful stille
Whan þat' Arcite had romed al his fille 1528
And songen at' the roundel lustely
Into a stody he felle sodeynly
As don þise louers in her queynt[e] geres
Now in þe croppe now do*un* in þe breres 1532

Now vp nowe doune as Boket' in a welle
Riȝt as þe friday soþly forto telle
Now it shyneþ nowe it reyneþ faste
Riȝt so gan gery Venus euer caste 1536
The hertes of her folk riȝt as hir' day
Is Gerful. riȝt' so chaungeþ she aray
Selde is þe friday al þe weke ylike
¶ Whan þat Arcite had ysonge he gan to sike 1540
And sette hym doune with oute[n] eny more [leaf 22]
Allas quod he þat' day þat' I was bore
Howe longe Iuno þorgh̄ þi cruelte
Wiltow werryen Thebes þe Citee 1544
Allas ybrought' is to confusioñ
The blood Roial of Cadme and Amphion̄
Of Cadmus whiche þat' was þe first man
That Thebes bilt. or first' þe toune bygan 1548
And of þe Cite first' was corowned kinge
Of his lynage am I and of his of-springe
By verrey lyne as of þe stok Roiall
And nowe I am so Catif and so thral 1552
That' he þat' is my mortal enemye
I serue him as his sqwier poorlye
And ȝit doþ me Iuno wel more shame
ffor I dar not' be-knowe myn owne name 1556
But þer [as] I was wonte to hiȝt' Arcite
Now hight' I Philostrate not' worþe a myte
¶ Allas þou felle Mars allas þou Iuno
Thus haþ ȝoure Ire our lynage alfordo 1560
Sauf oonly me *and* wrecched Palamoñ
That Theseus martereþ in prisoñ
And ouer al þis to sleen me vtterly
Loue haþ faire his darte so brennyngly 1564
Istiked þorgh̄ my trewe careful herte
That shapen was my deþ arst þan my sherte
Ȝe sleen me wiþ ȝoure yen Emelye
Ȝe ben þe cause wherfore þat' I dye 1568

Of al the remenant' of myn o*þer* care
Ne sette I nouȝt' the mountance of a tare
So *þat* I cowde do ouȝt' to ȝ*our* plesaunce
And wiþ þat' word' he felle do*un* in a trau*nce* 1572
A longe tyme and afterward' he vp stert
þis Palamon þat' þouȝt' þat þorgh̄ [his] herte
He felte a colde swerde sodeinly glide
ffor Ire he qwoke no lenger wold he bide [leaf 22, back. MS. repeats 'He felt a swerde sodeynly Glide']
¶ And whan þat' he had herde Arcites tale
As he were wode wiþ face dede *and* pale
He stert' hym vp out' of the buskes thikke
And seide Arcite fals traitour quykke 1580
Now art' þou hent' þat' louest' my lady soo
ffor whom þat' I haue al þis peyn *and* woo
And art' my blood and to my counsel sworne
As I ful oft' have tolde þe here to forn̄ 1584
And hast' by-iaped here Duke Theseus
And falsly chaunged hast þi name þus
I wil be dede or ellis þou shalt dye
Thowe shalt' not' loue my lady Emely 1588
But I wil loue hir' oonly and no moo
ffor I am Palamon þi mortel ffoo
And þouȝe þat' I no wepen haue in þis place
But out' of prisoñ am I-stert' by grace 1592
I drede nouȝt' but' eiþer þou shalt' dye
Or þou ne shalt' not' loue Emelye
Chese whicħ þou wilt' or þou shalt' not' asterte
¶ This Arcite wiþ ful dispitous herte 1596
Whan he hym knowe and had his tale herd'
As feers as a lyon pulled out' a swerd'
And seide þus by god þat' sitteþ aboue
Ne it were þat' þou art seke and wode for loue 1600
And eke þat' þou no wepen hast in þis place
Thow shuldest neuere out' of þis groue pace
þat' þou ne shuldest dyen of myn honde
ffor I defie þe swerte and þe bonde 1604

Whicħ þat þou seistꝰ I haue made to þe
Whatꝰ verrey fool þenk wel þatꝰ loue is free
And I wil loue hirꝰ mawgre al þi myȝtꝰ
Butꝰ for as moche as þou art a worþi knyȝtꝰ 1608
And willestꝰ to darreyn hirꝰ by bataille
Haue here my trouþe to morwe I nyl notꝰ faille
Wiþ outen wittingꝰ of eny o*þer*e wightꝰ [leaf 23]
Thatꝰ here I wil be founden as a knyghtꝰ 1612
And bringen harneis riȝtꝰ ynoughħ for þe
And chese þe bestꝰ and leue þe worstꝰ for me
And mete and drink þis nyght*e* wil I bringe
Ynough for þe and cloþes for þi beddynge 1616
And if so be þatꝰ þou my lady wynne
And sclee me in þis wode *þer* I am Inne
Thow maist wel haue þi lady as for me
This Palamon answerdꝰ I graunte itꝰ þe 1620
And þus þei bene departed til a morowe
Whan eche of hem had leide his feiþ to borowe
¶ O cupide outꝰ of al charite
O regne þat wold no felawe haue wiþ þe 1624
fful soþ is seide þatꝰ loue no lordship
Wil notꝰ his ꝑonkes haue no felawship
We fynde þatꝰ of Arcite and Palamo*u*n
Arcite is riden anoħ into the to*u*n 1628
And on þe morowe er itꝰ were day liȝtꝰ
fful p*ri*uely two harneys haþ he diȝtꝰ
Both suffisauntꝰ and mete to darreyħ
The bataille in þe feelde bytwix hem tweyħ 1632
And on his hors allone as he was b̄orn
He carieþ al his harneys hy*m* bif̄orn
And in þe Groue atꝰ tyme *and* place ysette
This Arcite and þis Palamon ben mette 1636
To chaungen gan þe colour in her face
Rightꝰ as þe hunters in [the] reyne of trace
Thatꝰ stondeþ atte gap[pe] wiþ a spere
Whan hunted is þe lyon or þe bere 1640

And hereþ him come russhing' in þe Greues
And brekeþ both̄ [the] bowes and þe leues
And þenkeþ here co*mm*eth my mortal enemye
Wiþ oute faile he mote be dede or I 1644
ffor eiþer I moot' scleen him atte gappe
Or he moot sclee me if þat' me myshappe
So feerden [thei] in chaungyng' of here hwe [leaf 23, back]
As fer as euerich̄ of hem oþer knewe 1648
Ther nas no good day ne no saluynge
But streiȝt' wiþ oute worde or rehersinge
Euerich̄ of hem helpeþ forto arme oþer'
As frendly as he were his owne broþer' 1652
And after þat' with sharpe speres stronge
They foynen eche at' oþer wonder longe
Thow myȝtest' wene þat' þis Palamon
In his fightinge were a wood lyon̄ 1656
And as [a] cruel tigre was Arcite
As wilde boores gon þei to-gider' smyte
That' frothen white as fome for yre woode
Vp to þe Ancle fought' þei in her bloode 1660
And in þis wise I lete hem fighting' dwelle
And forþ I wil of Theseus ȝou telle
¶ The destanye minister' generall̄
That' executeþ in þe world ouer all̄ 1664
The purueaunce þat god haþ say bifore
So stronge it' is þat' þei þe world had it swore
þe contrarie of a þinge be ye or nay
ȝit' som tyme it shal falle on a day 1668
That' falleþ nouȝt' eft wiþ in a þousand yere
ffor certeynly our appetites here
Be it' of werre or pees. or hate or loue
Al is þis rewled by þe sight aboue 1672
This mene I nowe by myghty Theseus
That' forto hunte is so desirous
And namely atte grete hert' in Maij
That' in his bed þer daweþ hy*m* no day 1676

That' he nys cladde and redy forto ride
Wiþ hunte and horn and houndes hy*m* biside
ffor in his hunting haþ he swich̄ delite
That' it' is al his ioye and appetite 1680
To bene hym self þe grete hertes bane
ffor after Mars he serueþ nowe Dyane
Cleer was þe day as I haue told̄ er þis / [leaf 24]
And Theseus wiþ al[le] Ioie *and* blis 1684
Wiþ his ypolita þe faire quene
And Emely[e] cloþed al in grene
On huntinge bene þei riden rially
And to þe Groue þat' stode ful fast' by 1688
In which̄ þer was an herte as men hy*m* tolde
But' Theseus þe streighte way haþ holde
And to þe launde he rideþ hym ful riȝt'
ffor þider was þe hert' wonte to haue his fliȝt' 1692
And ouer a broke and so forþ on his way
This duke wil haue a cours at' hym or tway
Wiþ houndes swich̄ as þat' him list comaunde
And whan þis duke was come vnto þe launde 1696
Vnder þe sonne he loked anoñ
He was ware of Arcite and Palamoñ
That' fouȝten breme as it' were boles two
The briȝte swerdes wenten to and fro 1700
So hidously þat' wiþ þe leest[e] stroke
It semeþ þat it wold̄ fellen an oke
But' what' þei were no þing' he ne wote
This duke his courser wiþ his spores smoote 1704
And at' a stert' he was atwixe he*m* twoo
A pulled out' a swerde and cried hoo
No more vp peyn of lesing' of ȝo*ur* hede
By myghty mars he shal anon be dede 1708
That' smyteþ eny stroke þat' I may sene
But' telleþ me what' myster men ȝe bene
That' ben so hardy forto fiȝten here
Wiþ oute Iugge. or oþer officere 1712

¶ As it were in litel liste ryalty
This Palamon answerde hastily
And seide Sir' what' nedeþ wordes moo
We han þe deþe deserued boþ twoo 1716
Two woful wrecched be we two catyfes
þat bene encombred of oure owne lifes
And as þow art' a riȝtful lorde and Iuge [leaf 24, back]
Ne ȝeue vs neiþer mercy ne refuge 1720
But' sele me furst' for seinte Iarite
But' slee my felowe eke as wel as me
Or slee hym [first] for þoughī þo[u] knowest lite
This is þi mortal ffoo þis is arcite 1724
That' from þi londe is banshed on his hede
ffor whiche he haþ deserued to be dede
ffor þis is he þat' come vnto þi gate
And saide þat' he hight' Philostrate 1728
Thus haþ he Iaped þe ful mony a ȝere
And þou hast' made him þi chief squyere
And þis is he þat' loueþ Emelye
ffor siþ þat' day is commen þat' I shal dye 1732
I make pleynly my confessioñ
That' I am þilk[e] wooful Palamoñ
That' haþ þi prison broken wikkedly
I am þi mortal foo and it' am I 1736
That' loueþ so hote Emely þe briȝt'
That' I wil dye present' in her siȝt'
Wherfore I axe deþ and my Iwes
But' sele my felawe in þe same wise 1740
ffor boþe we han deserued forto be sclayñ
This worþi duke answerd' anon agayn
And saide þis is a short' conclusioñ
ȝoure owne mouþe be ȝoure confessioñ 1744
Haþ dampned þer ȝou and I wil it' recorde
Hit nedeþ not' to pyne ȝou wiþ acorde
He shul be dede by myȝty mars þe rede
The quene anoon for verrey wommanhede 1748

Gan [for] to wepe and so seide Emelye
And al þe ladis in þe companye
Grete pite was it' as it þouȝt' he*m* alle
That' euere such a chaunce shuld byfalle 1752
ffor gentil men þei were of grete astate
And no þinge but' for loue was þis debate
And seegh̄ her blody woundes wide and sore [leaf 25]
And alle criden boþ[e] lasse and more 1756
Haue mercy vpon vs wommen alle
And on her bare knees doun þei falle
And wold han kissed his fete þer he stoode
Til at' þe last' a-sclaked was his moode 1760
ffor pite renneþ sone in gentile herte
And þoughe he first' for ire quoke *and* sterte
He haþ considered shortly in a clause
The trespase of hem both[e] and þe cause 1764
And al þouȝe his Ire her gilt' accused
ȝit' in his reson he hem both excused
And þus he þouȝ*te* wel þat' euery man
Wol helpe him self in loue if þat' he can 1768
And eke delyuere him self out' of p*r*isoñ
And eke him self had compassioñ
Of wo*m*men for þei wepen eu*ere* in oon
And in his gentile hert' he þouȝt' anōn 1772
And soft' vnto him self he seide fye
Vpon a lord þat' wil haue no mercy
But' be a lyon boþe in word' and dede
To hem þat' bene in repentaunce *and* drede 1776
As wel as to a prowde dispitous man
That wil mey[n]tene þat' he first bygan
That' lord haþ litel in discreccion
That' in such caas can no diuisioñ 1780
But weieþ pride and humblenesse after' oon
And shortely whan his Ire was þus agon
He gan to loken vp wiþ eyen light'
And spake þise same wordes al on hight' 1784

The god of love. o Benedicite
How myghty and howe grete a lord is he
Aȝeinst his myghtꝰ þer ȝeyneþ noñ obstacles
He may be cleped a god for his myracles 1788
ffor he can maken at is owne gyse
Of euerich̃ hertꝰ as þatꝰ hym listꝰ devise
Lo here þis arcite and þis Palamon [leaf 25, back]
That quietely were outꝰ of prisoñ goñ 1792
And myghtꝰ haue lyued in thebes Rially
And weten I am her mortal enemye
And þatꝰ her deþ is in [my] myghtꝰ also /
And ȝitꝰ haþ loue mawgre her eyen two 1796
[I-]Brouȝtꝰ him hidere boþ[e] forto dye
Now lokeþ is notꝰ þis a grete folye
Who may be a fool butꝰ if he loue
Biholde for goddes loue þatꝰ sitteþ aboue 1800
See howe þei blede bene þei notꝰ wel araied
Thus haþ her lorde þe god of loue hem paied
Her wages and her fees for her seruise
And ȝitꝰ þei wenene for to bene ful wise 1804
Thatꝰ seruen loue for ouȝtꝰ þatꝰ may bifalle
Butꝰ ȝitꝰ is þis þe beste game of alle
Thatꝰ she for whom þei haue þis Iolite
Can hem as moche thonke as me 1808
Shee wote no more of al þis hote fare
By god þan wote an Cuckowe or an hare
Butꝰ al mostꝰ be assaied hote and cold
A man mote be a fool or ȝonge or old 1812
I wote itꝰ by my self for yore agone
ffor in my tyme a seruaunte was I oone
And þerfor sith̃ I knowe of loues peyne
And wote howe sore it can a man distreyne 1816
As he þatꝰ haþ oft bene cauȝtꝰ in his laas
I ȝou forȝiue al holy þis trespaas /
Atte requestꝰ of þe quene þatꝰ kneleþ here
And eke of Emelye my sustersꝰ dere 1820

And ȝe shul boþe vnto me swere
That' neuermore ȝe shul my cuntre dere
Ne make werre vpon me nyȝt' ne day
But bene my frendes in al þat' ȝe may 1824
I nowe forȝeue þis trespase euery deł
And þei hym swore his axing' fair' and weł
And him of lordship and of mercye preide [leaf 26]
And so hem graunteþ grace and þus he seide 1828
To speke of Rial lynage and ricches
Thoo þat she were a quene or a princesse
Eche of ȝou boþe is worþi doutelees
To wedden whan tyme is but' naþelees 1832
I speke as for my suster' Emelye
ffor whoom ȝe haue þis strif and Ielosie
Ȝe wote ȝoure self ze may not' wedden two
At' ones þouȝe ȝe fiȝten euermoo 1836
þat' oon of ȝou be he loþ or liefe
He mot' go pipen in an yve liefe
This is to say she may not' nowe haue both̄
Ne be ȝe neuere so Ielous and so wroth̄ 1840
And for-þi þer nowe put' in þis degre
That' eche of ȝou shal haue his destane
As him is shape and harkeneþ in what' wise
Lo here ȝoure ende *and* þat' I shal devise 1844
¶ My wille is þis for plat' conclusiō
Wiþ oute[n] eny replicaciō
ȝif þat' ȝou likeþ take it' for þe best'
That' euery of ȝou shal go wher hy*m* lest' 1848
ffrely wiþ outen raunson [or] daungere
At þis day fifty wekes fer ne nere
Euerich̄ of ȝou shal bryng' an .C. knyȝtes
Armed for listes vp al rightes 1852
Al redy to darreyn hir' by batayle
And þis bihote I ȝou wiþ outen faile
Vpon my trouþe and as I am a knyȝt'
þat wheder of ȝou boþ[e] þat' haþ myȝt' 1856

This is to seyn þat whedere he or þowe
May wiþ his hundred as I haue spoke of nowe
Slee his contrary or out of lystes drive
Than shal I ȝeue hy*m* Emely to wyve 1860
To whom þat fortune haþ ȝeue so faire a grace
The listes shal I do maken in þis place
And god so wisly on my soule rwe [leaf 26, back]
As I shal euene Iuge be and trwe 1864
ȝe shal non o*þere* ende wiþ me make
þat oon of ȝou shal be dede or take
And if yow þenke þis is wel yscide
Sey ȝoure avice and holde ȝou wel apaide 1868
This is ȝoure ende and ȝo*ur* conclusiõ
Who lokeþ lightly now but Palamon
Swo springeth vp for Ioie but Arcite
Who coude telle or who coude it endite 1872
The Ioie þat is made in þat place
Whan Theseus haþ doñ so faire a *grace*
But doune on knees went euery man*ere* wiȝt
And thonked hym wiþ al her hert and myȝt 1876
And namely þise Thybeanes mony sithẽ
And þus wiþ hope and herte blithẽ
Thei take her leue and homward gan þei ride
Tho Thebes-ward wiþ olde walles wide 1880
[. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
¶ I trowe men wolde deme it necligence
If I forȝete to telle þe dispence
Of Theseus þat goþ so bisily
To maken vp þe listes rially 1884
That suche a noble theatre as it was
I dar wel seyn in þis world ther nas
The circuyte a mylo was aboute
Walled wiþ stone a*nd* dicched al wiþ oute 1888
Rounde was þe shappe in manere of a compas /

fful of degrees þe heghtꝑ of sixty paas
Thatꝑ whan a man was sette on oon degre
He letted notꝑ his felawe forto see 1892
Estwardꝑ þer stode a gate of Marbel white
Westwardꝑ rightꝑ such a noþer in þe opposite
And shortely to conclude such̃ a place
Was non in erþe as in so litel space 1896
ffor in þe londe þer nas no crafty man
Thatꝑ Geometrye or arsmetrike can
Ne purtraiourꝑ ne keruerꝑ of ymages [leaf 27]
Thatꝑ Theseus ne ȝaue him mete *and* wages 1900
The theater to make and to devise
And forto doon his riȝtꝑ and his sacrifise
He Estwardꝑ haþ [up]on þe gate aboue
In worship of wenus goddes of loue 1904
Done maken an awtere and an oratorie
And on þe westwardꝑ side in memorie
Of Mars he haþ maked riȝtꝑ such anoþ*ere*
þatꝑ costꝑ largely of gold a ffoþ*ere* 1908
And norþwardꝑ in a t*our*ettꝑ on þe wall̃
Of Alabaster white and rede Coral̃
An oratorie riche forto see
In worship of Diane of chaastite 1912
Haþ Theseus done wrouȝtꝑ in noble wise
Butꝑ ȝitꝑ had I forgete forto devise
Thatꝑ noble kervingges *and* þe p*our*tratures
þe shappe þe countena*u*nce and þe figures 1916
þatꝑ weren in þe oratories thre
ffirstꝑ in þe temple of Venus maist þ*o*u see
Wrouȝtꝑ on þe walle ful pitous to biholde
þe broken slepes and þe sighes colde 1920
þe sacred teeres and þe waymentynge
þe firy strokes of þe desiringe
þatꝑ loues seru*au*ntes in þis lif enduren
þe Oþes þatꝑ her con*au*ntes assuren 1924
Plesaunce and hope. desire fool-hardynesse

Beaute and þouȝt'. bawdry richesse
Charmes and force. lesingges and flaterye
Dispence bysynesse and Ielowsie 1928
þat' wered of ȝolowe goldes a garlonde
And a Cukkowe sitting' on her honde
ffeestes instrumentes Carolles daunces
Iuste and array and al þe circumstau*n*ces 1932
Of loue whiche I rekened *and* reken shall
By ordere were peynted on þe wall
And mo þan I con [make] of mencion [leaf 27, back]
ffor soþly al þe mont of Citharon 1936
Ther Venus haþ her p*r*incipal dwellinge
Was shewed in þe walle in purtraiynge
Wiþ al þe Gardeyne and þe lustynesse
Not' was forȝeten þe porter ydelnesse 1940
Ne narcisus þe faire of yore agone
Ne ȝit' þe foly of king' salamon
Ne ȝit' þe grete strengthe of hercules
þe enchauntementz of Medea and certes 1944
Ne of Turnus wiþ þe hardy fires corage
þe riche Cresus catif in seruage
Thus may ȝe sene þat wisdom ne ricchesse
Bewte ne scleighte. strengthe hardynesse 1948
Ne may with Venus holde chaumpartie
ffor as her list' þe world' þan may she gie
¶ Loo alle þise folk so caught' were in her las
To þei for woo ful often seide alas 1952
Suffiseþ here oon ensample or two
And þoughe þer coude rekne a thousand' moo
The statue of Venus glorious to see
Was naked fletinge in þe large see 1956
And from þe nauel do*u*n al keuered was
Wiþ wawes grene and briȝt' as eny glas
A Citole in hire riȝt*e* hond had she
And on her hede ful semely to see 1960
A Rose garlonde fresshe an wel smellinge

Aboue her hede her dowues flateringe
Byfore hir' stode hir' sone Cupido
Vpon his shulders wenges had he two 1964
And blynde he was as it' is ofte sene
A bowe he bare and arowes bri3t' *and* kene
¶ Whi shuld' I not eke as wel telle 3ou alle
The p*our*trature þat' was vpon þe walle 1968
Wiþ in þe temple of my3ty mars þe rede
Al peynted was þe walle in lengthe *and* brede
Like to þe Estres of þe grisly place [leaf 28]
þe hight' þe gr[e]te temple of Mars in trace 1972
In þilk[e] colde frosty Regyōn
Ther as Mars haþ his souereyñ manciōn
¶ ffirst' on þe walle was peynted a foreste
In which þer wonneþ neiþer man ne beste 1976
Wiþ knotty knarry bareyn trees olde
Of stubbes sharpe and hidous to biholde
In which̄ þer was a rombled and a swoghe
As þough̄ a storme shuld breke euery bou3e 1980
And dounward / from an hille vnder a bent'
There stode þe temple of Mars Armypotent'
Wrought' of al of burnyd steel of which̄ þe entent'
Was longe and streit' *and* goostly forto sent' 1984
And þer out' came a rage in such̄ a wise
þat' it' made al þe gates forto rise
Til norþeron li3t' in at þe doores shoōñ
ffor wyndowe on þe wall̄ þan was *per* nōñ 1988
þorowe whiche men my3t eny light' disc*er*ne
þe door was al of Athamant' eterne
Yclenched ouertwert' and endelonge
Wiþ Iren towe forto make it' stronge 1992
Euery piler þe temple to sustene
Was tonne grete of yren bri3t' *and* shene
Ther seghe I furst' þe [derk] ymagynyng'
Of felowny and al þe compassing' 1996
The cruel Ire rede as eny gleede

þe Pikpurs añd eke þe pale drede
þe smyler wiþ þe knyf vnder þe cloke
þe shippen brennyng' wiþ þe blak[e] smoke 2000
þe tresoñ of þe morþering' in þe bedde
pe open werre wiþ woundes al by-bledde
Conteckte wiþ blody knyff *and* sharpe manace
Al ful of chirkinge was þat' sory place 2004
þe scleer of him self ȝit' segh̄ I þere
His herte-bloode haþ baþed al his here
The nayle ydryuen in þe shode a nyȝt' [leaf 28, back]
Wiþ colde deþe wiþ mouþe gaping' vp riȝt' 2008
Amyddes of þe temple satte a meschaunce
Wiþ discomfort' and sori counten*au*nce
ȝit' sa*u*ghe I woodnesse laughing' in his rage
Armed compleint' outhees and fires corage 2012
þe Careyn in þe bussh̄ wiþ þrote ycorve
A thousand sclayne and not' of qualme ystorue
This tyraunt' wiþ þe pray by force yrafte
þe toune destroied þer nas no þing' ylafte 2016
ȝit' seghe I brent' þe shippes Hoppesteres
The hunte strāngled wiþ þe wilde beres
The sowe fretinge þe childe riȝt' in þe cradeħ
The Coke yscalded for al his longe ladeħ 2020
Nouȝt was forgeten by þe infortune of Marte
The Carter ouer-riden wiþ þe Carte
Vndere þe whele ful lowe he lay ado*u*n
þere were also of Martes dyuysio*u*n 2024
þe Barboure þe bochere and þe Smyth̄
þat' forgeþ sharpe swerdes on þe stith̄
And al aboue depeynted in a toure
Saughe I conquest' sittinge in grete honoure 2028
Wiþ þe sharpe swerde ouer his hede
Hanginge by a sotile twyned þrede
Depeinted was þe the sclauughter' of Iuliu
Of grete Nero and of Anthoneus 2032
Al be þat' þilk*e* tyme þei were vnborñ

ȝit was her deþ depeinted þer biforn̄
By manasing' of Mars riȝt' by figure
so was it' shewed in þe purtrature 2036
As is depeinted in þe certres aboue
Who shal be ded or slayne for loue
Suffiseþ oon ensample in stories olde
I may not' rekne hem al[le] þouȝe I wolde 2040
þe statue of mars vpon a carte stode
Armed and loked grymme as he were wode
And ouer his hode *þer* shyneþ two figures [leaf 29]
Of sterres þat' bene cleped in figures 2044
That' oon Puella that' oþer rubeus
This god of armes was araied þus
A wolf þer stode to forn him at' his fete
Wiþ eyen rede and of a man he ete 2048
Wiþ sotel pensel was depeynted þis storie
In recordinge of Mars and [of] his glorie
¶ Nowe to þe temple of Dyane þe chaste
As shortely as I can I wil me haste 2052
To telle ȝou al the descripcio*un*
Depeynted was þe wall*e* vp *and* do*un*
Of huntinge and of shamfast chastite
þer saughe I how wooful calistope 2056
Whan þat' Dyane agreued was [with] here
Was turned from a wo*m*man to a bere
And after was she made þe lode-sterre
Thus was she peynted I can say ȝou no ferre 2060
Her sone is eke a sterre as ȝe may see
þer saughe I dane turned to a tree
I mene not' þe goddes Dyane
But' Penneus doughter which *þat* hiȝte dane 2064
þer saugh I Attheon an hert' ymaked
ffor vengeaunce þat' he segh̄ diane al naked
I saugh̄ þat' how his houndes haue hym caughte
And freten him for þei knewe hym nauȝte 2068
ȝit' ypeynted was a litel ferþermore

Howe Atthelaunt' hunted þe wilde bore
And maleagre and mony oþer moo/
ffor whiche diane wrouȝt' hy*m* care *and* woo 2072
Ther seghe I many anoþer worþi story
Whiche men list' not' to drowe to memory
This goddes vpon an hert' ful wel she sette
Wiþ smale houndes al about' her fete 2076
And vnderneþe her fete she had a mone
Wexing' it' was and shal wany sone
In gaudy grene her statue cloþes was [leaf 29, back]
Wiþ bowe in honde and arowes in a cas 2080
Her eyen keste she ful lowe a doune
Ther Pluto haþ his derke regio*un*
A woman travailing' was hir' biforn
But' for her child was so longe vnborn̄ 2084
fful pitously lucyna can she calle
And seide helpe for þou maist' best' of alle
Wel coude he peynte lyvely þat' it wrouȝt'
Wiþ mony a floreyne he þe coloures bouȝt' 2088
¶ Now bene þise listes made and theseus
That' at his grete cost' araied þus
þe temple and þe theatre eu*er*y dele
Whan it' was done him liked wonder' wele 2092
But' stint' I wil of Theseus a lite
And speke of Palamon and [of] arcite
The [day] approcheþ of her retournynge
þat' eueriche shuld an C. knyghtes bringe 2096
The bataille to darrey as I you tolde
And to Athenes her couen*au*nte forto holde
Haþ euery of hem brouȝt' an .C. knyghtes
Wel armed for þe werre at' al[le] rightes 2100
And sikerly þer trowed many a man
That' neuere siþ þat' þe world bygan
That' forto speke of knyghthode of her honde
As fer as god haþ maked see or londe 2104
Nas of so fewe so noble a companye

ffor euery wight' þat' loued chivalrye
And wold his þonkes haue a passaunte name
Haþ preide þat' he myght' be of þat' game 2108
And wel was him þat' þerto chosen was
ffor if þer felle to morow such a caas
ȝe knowen wel þat' euery lusty knyȝt
þat' loueþ paramours *and* haþ [his] myȝt' 2112
Were it' in engelonde or ellis where
þei wolden fayne wilnen to be þere
To fight' for a lady O benedicite [leaf 30]
It were a lusty sighte forto se 2116
And right' so feerden þei wiþ Palamoñ
Wiþ hym þei wenten knyghtes mony oñ
Som wol be armed in an haberiōn
And a brest' plate and a litel gippōn 2120
And some wil haue a peire plates large
And some wil haue a Spruse plate sheeld or targe
Somme wil [be] armed on his legges wełłe
And haue an axe and some a mace of stele 2124
þer nas no newe gyse þat' it' nas olde
Armed were þei as I haue ȝou tolde
Euerich̄ after his opynyōn
Ther maist' þou see commyng' with Palamon 2128
Ligurge hym self þe grete king' of trace
Blak was his visage and manly was his face
þe Cercles of þe eyen in his hede
þei glowden bitwix ȝelowe *and* rede 2132
And liche a lyon loked he aboute
With kempte heeres on his browes stoute
His lymes grete his brawnes stronge
His sholdres brode his armes rounde *and* longe 2136
And as þe Gyse was in his cuntre
fful heghe vpon a chare of gold stode he
Wiþ .iiij. white boles in þe trais
In stede of cote armure and his harnais 2140
Wiþ nailles ȝelowe and briȝt' as eny gold

He had a berres skyn coleblake for olde
His longe heer was kempte behinde his bak
As eny rauens feþere it' shoon for blak 2144
A wreþe of gold'. arme briȝt' of huge wiȝt'
Vpon his hede sette ful of stonys briȝt'
Of fyne Rubies and of dyamauntz
About' his chare þer went' white alauntz 2148
xx^ti and moo as grete as ony ster'
To hunten at' þe lyon or þe deer'
And folowed hym wiþ mosel fast' ybounde [leaf 30, back]
Colers of golde and torrettes philed rounde 2152
An C. lordes had he in his route
Armed ful wel wiþ hertes steerne and stoute
¶ With Arcite in stories as men fynde
The grete Emetreus þe king' of ynde 2156
Vpon a stede bay trapped in stele
Couered wiþ a cloþe of gold diapred wele
Come riding' liche þe god of armed Mars
His cote armure was a cloþe of tars 2160
Couched wiþ peerles . white. rounde *and* grete
His sadel was of brent gold' newe ybete
A mantel vpon his shulder hongynge
Bret'ful of rubies rede as fire sp*ar*[c]linge 2164
His Crispe here liche rynges was yronne
And þat' was ȝelowe and glitering' as þe sonne
His nose was heghe his eyen briȝt' citryn
His lippes rounde his colour was Sangwyn 2168
A fewe frakens in his face spreynt'
Bitwix ȝelowe and somdele blak' ymeynt'
And as a lyon he is eyen caste
Of xxv^ti ȝere his age y caste 2172
His beerd was wel bygonne forto springe
His vois was as a trompet' þondringe
Vpon his hede he wered a laurer grene
A garlond fresshe and lusty forto sene 2176
Vpon his honde he bare for his delite

An Egle tame as eny lylye white
An .C. lordes had he wiþ hym þere
Al armed sauf her hedes in al her gere 2180
fful richely in al[le] maner þingges
ffor trusteþ wel þat' dukes Erles kyngges
Were gadered in þis noble companye
ffor loue and for encrees of chyualrye 2184
About' þis kny3t' þer ranne on euery part'
fful mony a tame lyon and leopart'
And in þis wise þise lordes al and some [leaf 31]
Bene on þe sonday to þe Cite come 2188
Aboute prime and in þe toun alight'
This Theseus þis duke þis worþi kny3t'
Whan he had brou3t' hem into his Cite
And Inned hem [ech] after her degre 2192
He feesteth hem and doþ so gret' laboure
To esen hem and done hem al honoure
That' 3it' men wenen þat' no mannys witte
Of noon astate ne cowde amenden it' 2196
The mynstralsy þe servise at' þe feest
The grete 3iftes to þe most' and leest'
The riche aray of Theseus palays
Ne who sat' first' and laste vpon þe dees 2200
What' ladies fairest bene or best' daunsinge
Or whiche of hem can beste daunce or singe
Ne who most' felingly spekeþ of loue
What' hawkes sitten or perche aboue 2204
What' houndes liggen on þe floor a-doun
Of al this nowe I make no mencyoun
But' al þe effecte þat' þenkeþ me þe best'
Nowe commeþ þe poynt' herkneþ if 3ou lest' 2208
¶ The sonday nyght' er day gan to springe
Whan Palamon þe larke herd singe
Al þou3e it' ner not' day by howres two
3it' songe þe larke and Palamon ri3t' þoc 2212
Wiþ holy hert' and wiþ an highe corage

He roos vp to we[n]den on his pilgrymage
Vnto þe blisful Cithera benygne
I mene Venus honurable and digne 2216
And in her houre he walkeþ forþ apaas
Vnto þe listes þer þe tempel was
And doune he kneleþ and wiþ humble chere
And herte sore he seide as ȝe shal here 2220
¶ ffairest'. o faire . o. lady myne Venus
Douȝtere to Ioue and spouse to Vlcanus
Thow glader of þe mounte of Citheroun [leaf 31, back,
ffor þilk[e] loue þou haddest' to a-doun 2224
Haue pite on my bitter teeres smerte
And take myn humble preier at' þine herte
Alas I ne haue no langage to telle
þe effecte ne þe tourment' of myn helle 2228
Myne herte may myn armes not' be-wreye
I am so confused þat' I can not' seye
But' mercy lady briȝt' þat' woost wele
My þouȝt' and seest' what' harmes I fele 2232
Considere al þis and rwe vpon my sore
As wisly as I shal for euermore
Hensforþ my myȝt' þi trewe seruaunte be
And hole werre alwaie wiþ chaastite 2236
That' make I myne avowe so as ȝe may helpe
I kepe not' of armes for to ȝelpe
Ne I ne axe not' to morowe to haue victorie
Ne renoun in þis caas ne veynglorie 2240
Of price of armes blowen vp and doun
But I wold haue fully possessioun
Of Emelye and dye in her seruise
ffynde þou þe manere howe *and* in what' wise 2244
I recche not' but' it' may better be
To haue victorie of hem or þei of me
So that' I haue my lemman in myn armes
ffor þouȝe so be þat' mars is god of armes 2248
ȝoure vertue is so grete in heuene aboue

þat' if þe lest I shal wel haue my loue
Thy tempel shal I worship euermoo
And on þine awtere wher I ride or goo 2252
I wil doon sacrifise and fires bete
And ȝif ȝe wil not' so my lady swete
þan prey I ȝou to morowe wiþ a spere
þat' Arcita me þorghe þe herte bere 2256
Then rekke I not' whan I haue lost' my lif
þouȝe Arcita wynne her to his wiff
This is þe effecte and eende of my priere [leaf 32]
ȝeue me my lady þou blisful lady dere 2260
¶ Whan þe orison was dōn of Palamōn
His sacrifise he did and þat' a-nōn
fful pitously wiþ al[le] circumstaunces
Al telle I not' as nowe his obseruaunces 2264
But' atte laste þe statue of Venus shoke
And made a signe wherby þat' he toke
þat' his preier accepted was þat' day
ffor þouȝe þe signe shewed a delay 2268
ȝit wist' he wele þat' graunted was his bone
And wiþ glad hert' he went' awaie ful sone
¶ þe iij. houre in-equal þat' Palamoñ
Byganne to venus temple forto goñ 2272
Vp roos þe sonne and vp roos Emelye
And to þe temple of Dyane gan she hie
Hir maidens þat' she þider wiþ hir ladde
fful redily wiþ hem þe fire þei hadde 2276
þe encense þe cloþes and þe remenaunte alł
þat to þe sacrifise longen shalł
þe hornes ful of methī as was þe gise
þer lacked nouȝt' to don her sacrifise 2280
Smoking' þe temple ful of cloþes faire
This Emelie wiþ herte debonaire
Hir' lady wasshe wiþ water of a welle
But howe she did hir riȝt' I dar not' telle 2284
But' it' be eny þing' in generałł

And ȝit' it' were a game to here it all
To him þat' meneþ wel it' were no charge
But' it' is good a man be at' his large 2288
Hir briȝt' heres were kempte vntressed all
A corone of a grene oke seriall
Vpon her hede was sette ful faire and mete
Two fires on þe awter gan she bete 2292
And did her þingges as men may biholde
In stace of Thebes and þise bokes olde
Whan kindeled was þe fire wiþ pitous chere [leaf 32, back]
Vnto Diane she spake as ȝe may here 2296
¶ O chaaste goddes of þe wodes grene
To whoom boþ heuene and erþe and see is sene
Quene of [the] regne of Polute derk and lowe
Goddes of maydenes þat' myn hert' hast' knowe 2300
fful mony a ȝere and woost' what' I desire
As kepe me from þi vengeance and þine Ire
That' attheon aboutȝte cruelly
Chaast' goddes wel woost' þou that' I 2304
Desire to be a maiden al my liff
Ne neuere wil I be [no] loue ne wiff
I am þou woost' ȝit' of þi companye
A maide and loue huntyng' and venerye 2308
And for to walke in þe wodes wilde
And not' to be a wiff and be wiþ childe
Nat' wil I knowe company of man
Now helpe me lady siþ ȝe may *and* can 2312
ffor þoo þre formes þat' þou hast' in þe
And Palamon þat' haþ such loue to me
And eke Arcite þat' loueþ me so sore
This grace I prei þe wiþ out more 2316
And sende loue and pees ytwyx hem twoo
And fro me turne away her hertes so
That' al her hote loue and her desire
And al her bysy torment' and her fire 2320
Be queynt' or turned in an o*þere* place

And if so be þou wilt' do me no grace
Or if it be my destany be shaped soo
That I shal nedes haue oon of hem two 2324
As sende me him þat' most' desireþ me
Biholde goddesse of clene chaastite
The bitter teeres þat' on my chekes falle
Siþ þou art' maide and keper of vs alle 2328
My maydenhode þou kepe *and* wel conserue
And while I lif a maiden I wil þe serue
þe fires brenne vpon þe Auter' clere [leaf 33]
While Emely was þus in his preiere 2332
But' sodeynly she seghe a þinge queynt'
ffor right' anoon oon of þe fires queynt'
And quicked ageyn and after þat' anōn
That' oþer fire was queynt' *and* al agōn 2336
And as it' queint' it made a qwistelinge
As done þise wete brondes in her brennynge
¶ And at' þe brondes eende out' ranne anōn
As it' were blody dropes mony ōn 2340
ffor which so sore a-gaste was Emelie
þat she was wel nyghe madde *and* gan to crye
ffor she ne wiste what' it' signified
But' only for þe fire þus she criede 2344
And wepte þat it' was pite for to here
And þer wiþ al Diane gan to apere
Wiþ bowe on hond right' as an hunteresse
And seide douȝtere stint' of þine heuynesse 2348
And monge the goddes high it is affermed
And by eterne worde writt' *and* confermed
þow shalt' be wedded vnto oon of þoo
þat' han for þe so moche care *and* woo 2352
But vnto which of hem I may not' telle
ffare wele I may no lenger dwelle
þe fire whiche þat' on myn awter' brenne
Shal þe declaren er þat þou go henne 2356
Thine aventure of loue as in þis caas

And w*ith* þat' worde þe Arowes in þe caas
Of þe goddes clateren fast and ringe
And forþ she went' and made a vanysshinge 2360
ffor whiche þis Emely a-stonyed was
And seide what' mounteth þis alas
I put' me in þi protectiōn
Diane *and* in þi disposiciōn 2364
And home she goþ þe nest*e* way
This is þe effecte þer is no more to say
þe next*e* houre of Mars folowing' þis [leaf 33, back]
Arcite vnto þe temple ywalked is 2368
Of feers mars to done his sacrifise
Wiþ al þe myghtes of his peynymes wise
Wiþ pitous hert' and heghe deuociōn
Riȝt' þus to Mars he seide his Orisoū 2372
¶ O stronge god þat' in the regnes colde
Of taars honoured art and lord yholde
And hast' in euery regne *and* eu*er*y londe
Of armes al þe bridel in þine honde 2376
And hem fortunest' as þe list' devise
Accepte of me my pitous sacrifise
If so be my þouȝte may deserue
And þat' my myght' be worþi forto serue 2380
Thi godhede þat' I may be oqn of þine
þan preie I þe to rwe vpon my pyne
ffor þilk peyn and þat' hoote fire
In which̄ þou brentest' whilom for desyre 2384
Whan þou vsedist' the beaute
Of faire yonge fresh*e* venus free
And haddest' hure in armes at' þi wille
Att̄ þoughe þe onys on a tyme mysfelle 2388
Whan vlcanus had kauȝt' þe in his laas
And foonde þe ligging' be his wif alaas
ffor thilk[e] sorowe þat' was in þine herte
Haue rauthe as wel vpon my peynes smerte 2392
I am ȝonge and vnkonyng' as þou wooste

And as I trowe wiþ loue offended moste
þat euere was eny lyues creature
ffor she þat doþ me al this woo endure 2396
Ne recheþ neuere wher I sinke of flete [MS. "flete of sinke]
And wel I wote ere she me mercy hete
I mote wiþ strengthe wynne her in þis place
And wel I wote wiþ outen helpe or grace 2400
Of þe ne may my strengthe not availe
Than helpe me lord to morowe in my bataile
ffor þilk[e] fire þat whilom brente þe [leaf 34]
As wel as þat fire now brenneþ me 2404
And do þat I to morowe haue victorie
Myne be þe travaile and þine be þe glorie
þi souereyn temple wil I most honouren
Of eny place and alway most labouren 2408
In þi plesaunce and in þi craftes stronge
And in þi temple I wil my baner honge
And all þe armes in my companye
And euermore vnto þe day I dye 2412
Eterne fire I wil byfore þe fynde
And eke to þis awowe I wil me bynde
My lorde my here þat hongeþ lowe a dow[n]e
þat neuere ȝit ne felt offencioun 2416
Of rasoure ne of shere I wil þe ȝeue
And bene þi trewe seruaunte while I lyue
Now lord haue rouþe vpon my sorowes sore
ȝif me þe victorie I axe þe no more 2420
The preier stint of Arcita þe stronge
The Ryngges on þe tempel door ȝit honge
And eke the door[e]s clateren ful fast
Of whiche Arcita somwhat hym a-gast 2424
The fires brennen vpon þe auter briȝt
That it gan al the temple for to light
And swete smelle anoon þe grounde vp ȝaf
And Arcita anoñ his honde vp haf 2428
And more ensense vnto þe fire he cast

Wiþ oþer riȝtes moo and atte last
The statue of Mars bygan his hauberk rynge
And wiþ þat soune he herde a m*ur*murynge 2432
fful lowe and dym þat seide þus victorie
ffor whiche he ȝaue to mars hono*ur and* glorie
An þus wiþ Ioie and hope wel to fare
Arcita is [y]brouȝt of Moch*e* care 2436
As fayn as foule is of þe briȝt*e* so*n*ne
And riȝt anon such strif is bygo*n*ne
ffor þilk[e] g*ra*untyng in þe heuene aboue [leaf 34, back]
By-twix venus þe goddes of loue 2440
And Mars þe steerne god armypotent
þat Iubiter was bysy it to stent
Til at þe [last] Pale Saturnus þe colde
þat knewe so mony of auentures old*e* 2444
ffonde in his bolde exp*e*rience and & [1] art [1 so]
þat he ful sone haþ plesed every part
And sooþ is seide elde haþ grete au*au*ntage
And elde is boþ[e] wisdome and vsage 2448
Men may þe olde attenne but not atrede
Saturne anōn to stinten strif and drede
Al be it þat it is aȝeinst his kinde
Of al his strif he can remedye fynde 2452
My dere doughter Venus quod sat*ur*ne
My cours þat haþ so wide forto t*ur*ne
Haþ more powere þan wote eny man
Myne is þe drenchinge in þe see so wan 2456
Myne is þe prison in þe derk*e* cote
Myn is þe stranglinge and þe hanging by þe þrote
þe murmur and þe chirles rebellinge
þe Gonynge and the privey enpoysenynge 2460
I do vengeaunce and pleyn correctiōn
While I dwelle in þe signe of the lyōn
Myne is þe Ruyne of [t]he hegh*e* halles
þe fallinge of þe toures and of þe walles 2464
Vpon þe mynour or vpon þe carpentere

I slowgh̄ Sampson shakingᵗ þe pilere
And myn[e] be þe maladies colde
The derk tresounes and þe castes olde 2468
My lokinge is þe fader of Pestilence
Nowe wepe no more I shal do my diligence
That Palamon þatᵗ is þine owne knyȝtᵗ
Shal haue his lady as þou hastᵗ [him] hiȝtᵗ 2472
Thouȝe Mars shal helpe his knyȝtᵗ ȝit naþelees
Bytwix ȝou tweyne þer mot be somtyme pees
Al be ȝe notᵗ of oon complexiōn [leaf 35]
Thatᵗ causeþ al day such̄ dyuysioñ 2476
I am þine eile redy atᵗ þi wille
Wepe̅ no more I wil þi lustᵗ fulfille
Now wil I stinten of þise goddes aboue
Of Mars and of venus goddes of loue 2480
And pleynly I wil telle ȝou as I can
þe grete effecte for which̄ þatᵗ I biganne
[. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
Grete was þe feestᵗ in Athenes þatᵗ day
And eke þatᵗ lusty seson in [that] may 2484
Made euery wightᵗ to be in suche plesaunce
And al þatᵗ day Iusten þei and daunce
And spenden itᵗ in Venus high̄ seruyse
Butᵗ by þe cause þatᵗ þei shulden rise 2488
Erly forto seen þe grete fight
Vnto her reste wentᵗ þei atte nyghtᵗ
And on þe morowe whan day gan to springe
Of hors and harnays noyse *and* clateringe 2492
þer was in hostelrye aboute
And to þe palaies rode þer mony a route
Of lordes vpon stedes and palfreis
þer maistᵗ þou see dyvisingᵗ of harneis 2496
So vncouþe and so riche *and* wrouȝt so well
Of Goldsmythrie of browdingᵗ *and* of steell

The sheeldes briȝte teesteers and trappures
Gold-hewen helmes hauberkes *and* cote armures 2500
Lordys in parementis on her coursers
Knyghtes of retenue and eke swiers
Nailinge þe speres and helmes bokelinge
Sigyng' of sheeldes wiþ layvers lasinge 2504
Ther as nede is þei were no þing' ydeꝗ
þe ffomynge steedes on þe golden brideꝗ
Snavyng' and fast' þe armurers also
Wiþ file and hamure riding' to and froo 2508
ȝemen on foote and comons many oñ
Wiþ shorte staues þikke as þei may goñ
Pipes trompettes nakerns and clariou*n*s [leaf 35, back]
þat' in þe bataille blewen blody sownes 2512
þe paleis ful of puple vp *and* do*u*n
Here þre þer ten holdinge her questio*u*n
Dyuynyng' of þise thibeanes knyȝtes twoo
Some seide þus. some seide it' shal be so 2516
So*m*me helde wiþ him wiþ þe blake berde
So*m*me wiþ þe balled some with þe þikke hered
Some seide he loked gry*m*me *and* he wold' fight'
He haþ a sp*ar*þe of xx^tt^ pounde wight' 2520
þus was þe halle ful of dyuynynge
Longe aftere þe sonne gan to springe
þe grete Theseus of his slepe gan wake
Wiþ mynstralcie and nois þat' þei make 2524
Heelde ȝit' þe chambre of his palais riche
Til þat' þe thebeane knyghtes boþ yliche
Honoured weren into þe place fette
Duke Theseus is at' þe wyndowe sette 2528
Araide riȝt' as he were a god in trone
The puple presed þidere-ward' ful sone
Him forto seen and done him high reuerence
And eke to harken his heest' and his sentence 2532
An herowde on a scaffold' made an oo /
Til al þe noise of þe puple was doo

And whan he see þe puple of noise al stille
Thus shewed he þe myȝty dukes wille 2536
þe lord haþ of his heghe discreciõn
Considered þat' it' were destruccion
To gentel blood to feghten in þis gise
Of mortall bataile now in þis emprise 2540
Wherfore to shapen þat' þei shal not' die
He wille his firste *pur*poos modefie
No man þerfor vp peyne of losse of liff
No maner shotte. ne pollax ne short' knyff 2544
Into þe listes sende or þidere bringe
Ne shorter swerd forto stoke wiþ poynt' bitinge
No man ne drawe ne bere it' be his side [leaf 36]
Ne no man shal vnto his felawe ride 2548
But' oon cours wiþ a sharpe grounden spere
ffoyn if hym list' on foote hy*m* self to were
And he þat is at' meschief shal be take
And not' sclayn but' be brouȝt' to a stake 2552
þat' shal be ordeyned on eiþer side
But' þidere he shal be foorce and *þer* abide
And if so falle þe Chevetayn be take
On eiþer side or ellis sclayn his make 2556
No lenger shal þe tornamente laste
God spede ȝou goo and leye on faste
Wiþ swerdes and longe maces fiȝteþ ȝ*our* fille
Go nowe ȝoure way þis is þe lordes wille 2560
The vois of puple touched heuene
So loude cried þei wiþ mery steuene
God saue suche a lord þat' is so good
He wilneþ no distructiõ of blood 2564
Vp goþ þe trompes and þe melody
And to þe listes ritt þe company
By ordin*aun*ce þorghe out' þe cite large
Honged wiþ cloþes of gold *and* not' wiþ sargo 2568
fful like a lorde þis noble duc' gan ride
Thise two Thebeanes on eiþer syde

And aftere rode þe quene *and* Emelye
And after þat' a nother companye 2572
Of oon and oþer after her degre
And þus þei passen þorgh out þe Cite
And to the listes come þei be tyme
It nas not' of þe day ȝit' fully pryme 2576
Whan sette was Theseus ful riche *and* hie
Ypolita þe quene and Emely
And oþer ladies in degrees aboute
Vnto þe setes preesen al þe route 2580
And westward' þorgh þe gates vnder mart /
Arcite and eke þe hundred of his part'
With banere rede is entred riȝt' anōn [leaf 36, back]
And in þat self[e] moment Palamōn 2584
Is vnder venus estward' in þat' place
With baner' white and hardy chere *and* face
And in al þe world' to seken vp and do*un*
So euene wiþ out' variacio*un* 2588
þer nere suche company[e]s tweye
ffor þer nas noon so wise þat' coude seie
That eny had of oþer au*aun*tage
Of worthynesse ne of estate ne age 2592
So euen were þei chosen forto gesse
And in to ringges faire þei hem dresse
Whan þat' her names redde were eu*er*echoñ
þat' in her nombre gile were þer nōn 2596
Tho were þe gates shette and c*ri*ed was loude
Do now ȝoure devoire yong*e* kny*ȝ*tes proude
The herawdes left' her prikking' vp and doun
Now ryngen trompes loude and clary*oun* 2600
þer is no more to seyn [but] est' and west'
In goon þe sharpe speres ful sadly into þarest'
In goþ þe sharpe spere into þe side
þere seen men who can iuste *and* who can ride 2604
þere shyueren shaftes vppon sheeldes þikke
He fileth þorgh þe herte spone þe prikke

Vp springen speres xx^{ti} fote on hight^{e}
Out^{e} goon þe swerdes as þe siluer^{e} white 2608
þe helmes þei to-hewen and to-shrede
Out^{e} bresteþ þe blode w*ith* sterne stremes rede
Wiþ myȝty maces þe bones þei to-brest^{e}
And þorgh̄ þe thikkest^{e} of þe throng^{e} gan threst^{e} 2612
þere stomblen stedes stronge and doun goñ alle
He rolleþ vnder fote as doþ a balle
He foyneþ on his foote wiþ his tronchoun
And he hym hurteþ wiþ his hors a-doun 2616
He þorgh̄ þe body is born *and* siþ is take
Maugre his hede and brouȝt^{e} vnto þe stake
As forward^{e} was [riȝt] þer he most^{e} abide [leaf 37]
Anoþer lad is on þat^{e} o*þere* side 2620
And somtyme doþ hem theseus forto rest^{e}
Hem to refresshe and drink[e] ȝif hem lest^{e}
fful of[te] a day han þise thybeanes two
To-gidere mette and wrouȝt^{e} eche o*þer* woo 2624
Vnhorsed haþ eche o*þere* of hem twey
þer was no tigre in vale of Galgopleye
Whan hir^{e} whelpe is stole whan it^{e} is lite
So cruel on þe hunte as is Arcite 2628
ffor Ielous hert^{e} vpon þis Palamoñ
Ne in Belmerie þer is so felle a lioñ
þat^{e} hunted is or for his hunger wode
Ne of his pray desireþ so þe bloode 2632
As Palamon to sclee his foo Arcite
þe Ielous strokes on her helmes bite
Out renneþ blood of boþ her sides rede
Somtyme an ende þer is on euery dede 2636
ffor or þe sonne vnto þe rest*e* went^{e}
þe Stronge king^{e} Emet*ri*us gan hent^{e}
This Palamon as he fauȝt^{e} wiþ Arcite
And made his swerde depe in his flesh*e* bite 2640
And by [the] force of xx^{ti} is he take
Vnȝolden and drowen to þe stake

And in þe Rescowe of þis Palamoñ
The stronge kingᵗ ligurge is born do*u*n 2644
And kinge Emet*r*ius for al his grete strengthh̄
Is born outᵗ of his sadel his swerdes lengthh̄
So hitᵗ hym Palamon er he were take
Butᵗ al for nouȝtᵗ he was brouȝtᵗ to þe stake 2648
His hardy hert*e* may hym helpe nouȝtᵗ
He mote abide whan þatᵗ he is ykauȝtᵗ
By force and eke by composiciōn
Who sorowe þ now butᵗ woful Palamon 2652
They mote no more go ageyn to fiȝtᵗ
And whan þatᵗ he had sene þatᵗ siȝtᵗ
He cried Hoo no more for itᵗ is doñ [leaf 37, back]
Ne noon shal lenger to his felawe goñ 2656
I wil be trewe Iuge and notᵗ partie
Arcite of Thebes shal haue Emelye
Thatᵗ by his fortune haþ hirᵉ fair*e* wo*n*nen
Anon þer is a vois of puple by-gonne 2660
ffor Ioie of þis so loude and highh̄ wiþ-all*e*
It semed þatᵗ þe listes shulden falle
Whatᵗ can nowe faire Venus do aboue
Whatᵗ seiþ she now whatᵗ doþ þis quene of loue 2664
But wepeþ so for wantingᵗ of her wille
Til þatᵗ her teeres in þe listes fille
She seide I am ashamed doutelees
Saturnus seide doughterᵉ holdᵉ þi pees 2668
Mars haþ his wil his knyghtᵗ haþ al his bone
And by myne hede þou shaltᵗ be esed sone
The trompours wiþ þe loude mynstralsie
The harawdes þatᵗ ful loude ȝelle *and* crye 2672
Bene in her wele for Ioie of daun arcyte
Butᵗ harkeneþ me and stint*e* vois a lite
Swiche a myracle þer bifelle anōn
This fere Arcite haþ of his helme ydoñ 2676
And on a courcere forto shew his face
He prikkeþ endelonge þe large place

Loking' vpward' vnto Emelye
And she aȝein him cast' a frendly ye 2680
ffor wo*m*men as to speken in comune
Thei folowen al þe fauo*ur* of fortune
And was al his [in] chere as in his herte
Out' of þe grounde a fyre Infernal sterte 2684
ffrom Pluto sent'. at þe request' of Saturne
ffor which̄ his hors for fere gan to turne
And lepe a-side and foundred as he lepe
And or þat' Arcyte may taken kepe 2688
He pight' him on þe pomel of his heued
þat in þe place he laie as he were dede
His brest' to-broste wiþ his sadel bowe [leaf 38]
As blak he lay as eny cole or crowe 2692
So was þe blood yronne in his face
Anon he was [y]brouȝt' out' of þe place
Wiþ herte sore vnto Theseus palays
þo was he coruen out' of his harnays 2696
And in a bedde ybrouȝt ful faire *and* blyue
ffor he was ȝit' in memorie *and* on lyue
And alway crying' after emelie
Duke Theseus wiþ al his companye 2700
Is co*m*men home to Athenes Cite
With alle blisse and grete solempnite
Al be it' þat' þis auenture is falle
He wolde not' discomforte[n] hem alle 2704
Men seide eke þat' Arcide shuld not' dye
He shal be heled of his maladye
And of anoþer þinge þei were as fayne
þat' of hem alle þer nas no man slayne 2708
Al were þei sore ybete and namely oñ
þat' wiþ a spere was þrelled þe brest boñ
Two oþer woundes and two broken armes
Som*m*e had salue and some had charmes 2712
ffermacies of erbes and eke saue
þei dronken for þei wold' her lyues haue

ffor whicħ þis noble duke as he wel can
Conforteþ and honoureþ euery man 2716
And made Reuel al þe longe nyȝt
Vnto þe straunge lordes as it was riȝt
Ne þere was holde no discomforture
[. 2720
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
ffor fallinge is by an awenture
Ne to be lad by force vnto a stake
Vnȝolden and wiþ xx^ti^ knyȝtes take 2724
A p*er*sone alon wiþ out*e* moo
And haried forþ by arme fote *and* too
And eke his stede dryven forþ w*ith* staues
With fote men boþ ȝemen *and* [eke] knaues 2728
It was aretted him no vilanye [leaf 38, back]
þer may no man clepe[n] it cowardye
ffor whiche a-non duke Theseus lete crye
To stynten al rancour and [al] envie 2732
Gree þei as wel of on side as of oþer [MS. þei "Gree."]
And eiþer side ylike as oþeres broþer
And ȝaf hem ȝiftes after her degre
And fulli heelde a feest*e* daies þree 2736
And conueyed þe kingges worþely
Out of his toune a Iourne largely
And home went euery man þe riȝt[e] way
þ*er* was no more but fare wel & haue good day 2740
¶ Of þis bataille I wil no more endite
But speke of Palamon *and* of Arcyte
Swelleþ þe brest of Arcyte and þe sore
Encreseþ at his herte more *and* more 2744
The clotered blood for eny leche craft
Corrumpeþ and is in his body laft
þat neiþer veyn[e] blood ne ventowsinge
Ne drinke of herbes may be [him] helpinge 2748
By vertue expulsif or anymalt
ffro þilk[e] vertu cleped naturalt

Ne may þe venyme voide ne expelle
The pipes of his longges gan to swell 2752
And euery lacert' in his hert' adoun
Is shent' wiþ venyme *and* corrupcioun
Hym Geyneþ neiþer forto gete his lif
Vomyte vpward' ne dounward' laxatif 2756
Al is to-brosten thilk[e] regiõn
Nature haþ no dominaciõn
And certeinly þer nature wil not' wirche
ffarewel Phisik go bere þe man to chirche 2760
This is all and some þat' Arcita most' die
ffor which he sendeþ after Emelie
And Palamon his cosyne dere
þan seide he þus as ȝe shal after here 2764
Not' may my woful spirite in myn hert' [leaf 39]
Declare a poynt' of my sorowes smert'
To ȝou my lady þat' I loue moste
But' I biqueth þe seruise of my gooste 2768
To ȝou abouen euery creature
Siþ þat' my lif[e] may no lenger dure
Allas þe woo allas þe peynes stronge
þat' I for ȝou haue suffred and so longe 2772
Alas þe deþe alas myn Emelie
Alas departinge of our companye
Alas my hertes quene alas my lief wif
Myn hertes lady endere of my lif 2776
What' is þe world' what' axen men to haue
Now wiþ his loue nowe in his cold[e] graue
Allone wiþ oute[n] eny companye
ffare wel my foo fare wel myn Emely 2780
And softe take me in ȝoure [armes] twey
ffor loue of god herkeneþ what' I seie
I haue here wiþ my Cosyn Palamon
Had strif and rancoure mony day agon 2784
ffor loue of ȝou and for my Ielousie
And Iubiter so wis my soule gye

To speken of a seruaunt' *pro*prely
Wiþ circumstaunces al trewly 2788
þat' is to seyn trouth̄. honure *and* kny3thede
Wisdom humblesse estat *and* high̄ kynrede
ffredom and al þat' longeþ to þat' art'
So Iubiter haue on my soule part' 2792
As in þis worlde ri3t' now know I none
So worþi to be biloued as Palamon
þat' serueþ 3ou and wil do. al his liff
And if þat 3e shal euer bene a wif 2796
ffor3ete not' Palamon þe gentile man
And wiþ þat' worde his speche faile bygan
ffor from his fete vnto þe hert' was come
þe colde of deþ þat had him ouercome 2800
And 3it' more ouer for in his armes twoo [leaf 39, back]
þe v[i]tal strength̄ is lost' and al ago
Only þe intellecte wiþ oute more
þat' dwelled in his herte sik *and* sore 2804
Gan failen whan þe herte felte deth̄
Dusken his eyen two *and* faileþ breþe
But' on his lady 3it cast he his ye
His laste word was mercy Emelye 2808
His spirit' chaunged hens and went[e] þere
As I cam neuere I can not' telle where
Therfor I stint' I am no dyvynystre
Of soules fynde I not' in þis registere 2812
Ne me ne list' þilk opynyons to telle
Of hem þou3e þat þei writen wher þei dwelle
Arcite is colde þat' mars his soule gye
Now wil I speken forþ of emely 2816
Shrite Emely an halowen Palamon
And Theseus his suster' toke anōn
Swownyng' and bar hir' fro his cours away
What' helpeþ it' vs to tarien forþ þe day 2820
To tellen howe she wepte boþ euen *and* morowe
ffor in suche caas wo*m*men han suche sorowe

Whan þat' her husbondes bene fro hem a-goo
[That] ffor þe more parte þei sorowen soo 2824
Or ellis fallen in such Maladie
þat' at' þe laste certeynly þei die
Infinite harmes bene *and* eke þe teeres
Of olde folk and folk of tendere ȝeres 2828
In all þe toun for deth of þis Thebean
ffor him þer wepen boþ[e] child *and* man
So grete weping' was þer [non] certayn
Whan Ector was [y]brouȝt' *and* fressh ysclayn 2832
To Troy allas þe pite þat' was þere
Cracching' of chekes renting' eke of here
Whi woldest' þou be dede þise wo*m*men crie
And haddest' gold ynoghe and emelye 2836
No man myght' glade Theseus [leaf 40]
Sauyng' his olde fadere Egeus
That' knewe þis worldes t*ra*nsmutacio*u*n
As he had sene it' vp and doun 2840
Ioie after woo and woo aftere gladnesse
And shewe þ hem ensample and liknesse
Riȝt' as þer dyed neuer man quod he
þat' he ne lyued in erþe in som degre 2844
Riȝt' so ther lyued neuere man he seide
In al þis world þat' somtyme he ne deyed
þis world is nouȝt' but' a þorght' fare ful of woo
And we bene pilgrymes passing' to and froo 2848
Deþ is an ende of euery worldly sore
And ouer al þis ȝit seide he mychel more
To þis effecte ful wisely to enhorte
þe puple þat þei . hem shul recomforte 2852
Duke Theseus wiþ al his bisy Cure
Tasteþ nowe where þat' þe sepulture
Of good Arcite may best' ymaked be
And eke most' honurable of degre 2856
And atte last' he toke conclusion
That' þer as first' Arcite and Palamon

Had for loue þe bataile hem bitwene
þat in þe self groue swete and grene 2860
þer as he had his Amerous desires
His compleynt' and for loue his hote fires
He wold[e] make a fire in whicħ þe office
ffuneral he myȝt' hem all complice 2864
He lete anon comaunde to hakke *and* hewe
þe okes olde and leye hem on a rewe
In colpons wel araied forto brenne
His Officers *with* swift[e] fote thei renne 2868
And riȝt' anon at' his comaundement'
And aftere Theseus haþ ysent
Aftere a beer' and it' al ouer spradde
Wiþ cloþ of gold' the ricchest' þat' he hadde 2872
And of þe same sute he cloþer Arcite [leaf 40, back]
Vpon his hondes [were] his gloucs white
Eke on his hede a croune of laurere grene
And in his hand a swerde ful briȝt' *and* kene 2876
He laide him bare þe visage vnto þe bere
Ther wiþ he wepte þat' pite was to here
And for þe puple shulde sene hym all
Whan it' was daie he brouȝt' hym to þe hall 2880
þat' roreþ of þe crie and of þe sorowe sone
þoo gan þis woful Thebean Palamon
Wiþ flotery berd' and ruggy asshy heres
In cloþes blake dropped al wiþ teeres 2884
And passing oþer of weping' Emelie
She rewfullest' of al þe companye
In as moche as þe seruyse shuld be
þe more noble and riche in his degre 2888
Duke Theseus lete forþ þe stedes bringe
That' trapped were in steel al gliteringe
And keuered wiþ þe armes of Dame Arcite [*or* Daine]
Vppon þise stedes grete and white 2892
Ther stoden folk of whicħ oon bare his sheelde
Anoþer his spere vpon his hondes helde

The iij. bare wiþ him bowe turkeys
Of brent' gold was þe caas *and* eke þe harneys 2896
And riden forþ a paas wiþ sory chere
Towardes þe groue as ȝe shul after here
The noblest' of þe Grekes þat' þer were
Vpon her shulders cariden þe bere 2900
Wiþ sclak[e] paas and yen rede *and* wete
þorgh out þe Cite by þe maister strete
þat sprad was al wiþ blak and wonder hye
Riȝt of þe same is þe strete ywrie 2904
Vpon þe Riȝt honde went' olde Egeus
And on þat' oþer side Duke Theseus
Wiþ vesselles in her hondes of gold' ful fyne
Al ful of hony. mylk. [and] blood. *and* wyne 2908
Eke Palamon with ful grete companye [leaf 41]
And aftere þat' come wooful Emelie
Wiþ fire in hand as was þat' time þe Gyse
To do þe office of funeral seruise 2912
Hig̃h labour / and ful grete apparaillinge
Was at' þe seruyse and at' þe fire makinge
That' wiþ his grene top þe heuene raught
And xx^tti fadmes in brede þe armes raught' 2916
This is to seine þe bowes were so brode
Of strawe first þer was leide mony a lode
But' howe þe fire was maked vp[on] hiȝt'
Ne eke þe names howe þe trees hiȝt' 2920
As Oke. fir. birch̃. asp. alder. Elme. popelere.
Wilowe. holme. playn. assh̃. box. Chesteyn. bynd'. laure.
Mapel. þorne. becche. ewe. hasell̃. wypultre.
How þei were felled shal not' be tolde for me 2924
Ne howe þe goddes ronnen vp *and* doun
Disherites of her habitacioun
In whiche þei wonden in rest' *and* pees
Nymphes. ffawnes *and* amadries 2928
Ne howe þe beestes ne þe briddes alle
ffledden for fere whan þei were falle

Ne howe þe grounde agast' was of þe liȝt'
That' was not' wonte to se þe sonne briȝt' 2932
Ne how þe fire was couched first wiþ stre
And þan wiþ drie stikkes clouen a þree
And þan wiþ grene wode and spicerie
And þan wiþ cloþe of gold' and [wiþ] perrie 2936
And Garlondes honging' wiþ mony a floure
The myrr' þensence with swete odoure
Ne how arcite lay among' al þis
Ne what' richesse aboute his body is 2940
Ne howe Emely as was þe Gise
Put' in þe fire of funeral seruise
Ne howe she swowned whan made was þe fire
Ne what' she spak ne what' was her desire 2944
Ne what' Ielous men in þe fire cast' [leaf 41, back]
Whan þat þe fire was grete and brente fast'
Nowe howe some cast' her sheelde *and* some her spere
And of her vestementes which þei were 2948
And Coppes ful of mylke and wyne *and* blood
Into þe fire þat' brent' as it' were wode
Ne howe þe greges wiþ an huge route
Thrise riden al þe fire aboute 2952
Vpon þe lift' honde wiþ a loude shoutinge
And thries wiþ her speres clateringe
And thries how þe ladise gan crie
Ne howe þat' lad was homward' Emely 2956
Ne how arcyte is brent' in asshen colde
Ne how þe liche-wake was [y]holde
Al þat' nyght' ne howe þe Grekes pleye
The wake-plaies kepe I not' to seie 2960
Who wrastelcþ best' naked *with* oile anoynt'
Ne who [that] bare him best' in no dysioynt'
I wil not' tellen att howe þei [ben] gone
Home til Athenes whan þe play is done 2964
But' shortely to þe point' þan wil I wende
And make[n] of my longe tale an ende

By processe and by length of ȝeres
Al stinte is þe mo*ur*nyng and þe teeres 2968
Of Greges by oon general assent
Than semed me þer was a p*ar*lement
At Athenes vpon a certeyn point *and* caas
And amonge pointes [ther] yspoken waas 2972
To haue wiþ certeyn contrees alliance
And haue of Thebeanes fully obeisañce
ffor which this noble theseus anōn
Lete sende[n] after gentile Palamon 2976
Vnwist of him what was þe cause *and* whi
But in his blake cloþes sorowfully
He come at his comaundement in hie
Tho sente Theseus for Emelye 2980
Whan þat þei were sette and huyst was al þe place [leaf 42]
And Theseus abiden haþ þe space
Or eny worde come fro his wise brest
His yen sette he þer hy*m* lest 2984
And such a sad visage he sighed stille
And after þat riȝt þus he seide his wille
The first*e* mouer of þe cause aboue
Whan he first made þe faire cheyn of loue 2988
Gret was þe effecte and high was his entent
Wel wist he why and what þerof he ment
ffor wiþ þat faire cheyne of loue he bonde
The fuyre. þe. Eire þe water and þe londe 2992
In certeyn boondes þat þei may not flee
That same prince and þat same mouer q*uo*d he
Haþ stablesshed in þis wrecched world adoun
Certeyn days and Dominacio*un* 2996
To al þat is engendred in þis place
Ouer þe whiche day þei may not pace
Al mowe þei ȝit þe daies abregge
Ther nys noon autorite to legge 3000
ffor it is proued by exp*er*ience
But that me lust declare my sentence

Than may men by þis order discerne
That þilk mouer stable is and eterne 3004
Wel may men knowe but' it' be a fool
That' euery part' darrayueth fro his hool
ffor nature haþ not' taken his bygynnyng'
Of no partie or of catel of no þing' 3008
But' oon þinge þat' *par*fit is and stable
Descendinge so til it' be corruptable
And þerfore of his wise purueaunce
He haþ so wel bysette his ordyn*au*nce 3012
þat' specifie of þingges and p*ro*gressiones
Shullen endure by successiones
And not' eterne wiþ oute eny lye
This maist' þou vnderstond' *and* see atte ye 3016
Lo the Oke þat' hath so longe a norshinge [leaf 42, back]
ffro þe tyme þat' it bygynneþ furst' to springe
And haþ so longe a lif as ȝe may se
ȝit' at' þe last*e* waasted is þe tree 3020
Consideren eke howe þat' þe herd*e* stone
Vnder our fete on which̄ we treden and gone
ȝit' .ȝ. wasteþ it' as it' lith̄ in þe way
þe Brode Ryuer somtyme wexeþ dray 3024
þe grete townes so wide wane and wende
Than þe see þat' al þis þing' haþ ende
And man and wo*m*man so we wil also
That' nedeþ in oon of þe teermes twoo 3028
þat' is to sayn in youþe or ellis i*n* age
He mote be dede þe kinge as wel as page
Some in his bed some in þe depe see
Some in þe large felde as ȝe may see 3032
Ther helpeþ nouȝt' al goþ þat' ilk waye
þan may I seie þat' al þis þing' wil deye
What' makeþ þis but' Iubiter þe king'
þat' is prince and cause of al þing' 3036
Couerting' al vnto his p*ro*pre wille
ffrom which̄ it is darreyude soþ to telle

And here agayne no creature on lyue
Of no degre availleþ forto stryue 3040
Than is it' wisdome as þenkeþ me
To make vertue of necessite
And take it' wel þat' we may not' eschew
And namely þat'. þat' to vs all is dwe 3044
And who so grucheþ ouȝt' he doþ foly
And rebell is to him þat al may gye
And certeynly a man haþ most' honour
To dyen in his excellence and flour' 3048
Whan he is siker of his good name
þan haþ he done his frende ne hy*m* no shame
And gladder' auȝt / his frende . ben of his deth
Whan wiþ honour' yȝolden is vp þe breeth 3052
Than whan his name appalled is for age [leaf 43]
ffor al forȝeten is his vassalage
Than is þe best' as for a worþi fame
To dyen whan he is best' of name 3056
The Contrarie of al þis is wilfulnesse
Why grucche we whi haue we heuynesse
That' goode Arcite of Chyualre þe flour'
Departed is wiþ dwete and wiþ honour' 3060
Out' of þe foule p*ri*son of þis liff
Whi grucchen here his cosyn and his wiff
Of his welfare þat' loueþ hem so wel
Can he hem þonk. nay god wote neu*er* a dell 3064
That' boþ his soule and eke hem [self] offende
And ȝit' þei mowe not' hir lustes amende
What' may conclude of þis longe serie
But' after woo I rede vs be merie 3068
And þanken Iubiter of al his grace
And or we departen from þis place
I rede we made of sorowes twoo
Oo p*ar*fite Ioie lasting' euermoo 3072
And loke nowe wher most' sorowe is her' Inne
þer at' wil I furst' bygynne

Suster quod he þis is my ful assent
Wiþ all thaues here of my parlement 3076
That Gentile Palamon ȝour owne knygȝt
þat serueþ ȝou wiþ wille herte *and* myȝt
And euer haþ do siþen ȝe first hym knewe
þat ȝe shal of ȝoure grace vpon hym rewe 3080
And taken [hym] for husbonde and for lord
Lene me ȝoure honde for þis is our accord
Lete se nowe of ȝoure womanly pite
He is a kingges broþer sone parde 3084
And þouȝe he be a poor bachiler
Siþ he haþ serued ȝou so mony a ȝere
And had for ȝou so grete aduersite
It most be considered leueþ me 3088
ffor gentel Mercy ouȝt to passen riȝt [leaf 43, back]
Than seide he þus to Palamon þe knyȝt
I trowe þere nede litel sermonynge
To make ȝou assente to þis þinge 3092
Commeþ nere and takeþ ȝoure lady by þe honde
Bytwix hem two was made anoñ þe bonde
þat hiȝte Matrimoyne or mariage
By all þe counsaile and [the] baronage 3096
And þus wiþ al[le] blisse and melodye
Haþ Palamon ywedded Emelye
And god þat al þis world haþ wrouȝt
Send hym his loue þat haþ it dere bouȝt 3100
ffor nowe is Palamon in al[le] wele
Lyuynge in al blisse in ricches and in hele
And Emely him loueþ so tenderly
And he hir serueþ so gentely 3104
Was neuer no worde hem bitwene
Of Ielousie or eny oþer tene
Thus endeþ þe tale of Palamon and Emelye
And god saue al þis faire companye 3108

¶ Here endeþ þe knyghtes tale

& here bygnneþ

þe Prologe of þe Milleres tale

¶ The Prologe

Whan þat' þe knyght' had *þus* his tale told'
In al the companye nas þer ȝonge ne olde
Þat' he ne seide it' was a noble storie
And worþi to be drawe in memorie 3112
And namely the gentels cuerechoñ
Our hooste loughe and swore so mot' I goñ
This goþ a riȝt' vnbokeled is þe male
Lat' se nowe who shal telle anoþ*er*e tale 3116
ffor trewly þe game is wel bygonne
Now telleþ ȝe sir' monke ȝif ȝe conne
Somwhat to quyte wiþ þe knyghtes tale
The Miller' þat' for-dronke was al pale 3120
So þat' vnneþes vppon his hors he satte
He wold availe neiþe hode ne hatte
Ne abide no man for his curtesie [leaf 44]
But' in Pilates vois he bygan to crie 3124
And swore by armes blode and bones
I can a noble tale for þe nones
Wiþ þe which I wil now quyte þe knyȝtes tale
Our' [hooste] seghe þat' he was dronke of ale 3128
And seide abide Robyn leue brother'
So*m*me better man shal telle vs first' anoþer'
Abide and [let] us wirche thriftely
By goddes soule quod he þat wil not' I 3132
ffor I wil speke or ellis go my way
Our hooste answerd' seye on a deuel way
Thou arte a fool þi witt' is ouerco*m*men
Now harkeneþ quod þe myllere al and som 3136
¶ But' first' I make a protestacio*u*n
þat' I am dronke I knowe it' by my so*u*n
And þerfore ȝif I mysspeke or say
Wite it' þe Ale of suthwerk I ȝou pray 3140

ffor I will telle a legend̃ and a liff
Boþ of a Carpenter̃ and [of] his wiff
How þat̃ a clerke reft̃ the wriȝtes cappe
The reue answerd̃ and seide stint̃ of þi clappe 3144
Lat̃ be þi lewde dronken harlotrie
It̃ is a synne and eke a grete folye
To appeyren eny man or hy*m* diffame
And eke to bringe wives in such̃ name 3148
Þow maist̃ ynowe of oþer þingges seine
Þis dronken Millere spake ful sone ageyn̄
And seide leue broþer oswalde
Who haþ no wif. is no kukwold̃ 3152
But̃ I seie not̃ *þer*for þat̃ þou art oon̄
Ther ben ful good[e] wyues mony on̄
[. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] 3156
Whi art̃ þou angry wiþ my tale nowe
I haue a wiff p*ar*de as wel as þou/
ȝit̃ nolde I for þe oxen in my plogh̄
Take vpon me more þan ynogh̄ 3160
As demen of my seluen þat̃ I were oon*e* [leaf 44, back]
I wil bylieue þat̃ þat̃ I am none
An husbond̃ shuld̃ not̃ be inquesitif
Of goddes p*ri*uete ne of his wif 3164
So he may finde goddes foyson þe*re*
Of þe remenant̃ nedeþ nat̃ to enquere
What̃ shuld̃ I more seie but̃ þe Millere
He nyl his wordes for no man for-bere 3168
But̃ tolde his Chirles tale in his manere
Me forþenkeþ *þat̃* I shal reherce it here
And þerfore euery gentil wiȝt̃ I preie
Demeþ not̃ for goddes loue þat̃ I seie 3172
Of euel entent̃ but̃ for I mote reherce
Her tales alle be þei better̃ or wors/
Or ellis fals som*e*n of my matere
And þerfore who list̃ it̃ not̃ here 3176

Torne ouer þe lief and chese anoþ*er* tale
ffor ȝe shul fynde ynow grete *and* smale
Of historial þinge þat touchеþ gentilnesse
And eke moralite and holynesse 3180
Blame not me ȝif þat ye chese amys
The Millere is a cheerle ȝe knowe wel þis
So was the Reue eke and other moo
And harlotrie þei told boþ twoo 3184
Avise ȝou and put me out of blame
And eke men shal not make ernest of game
Thus endeþ þe prologe.

[*No break in the MS.*]

And here by-
gynneþ þe Millers Tale.
¶ Narracio

Whilom þer was dwelling' in Oxenford'
A riche gnof' þat' gestes helde to bord' 3188
And of his craft' he was a Carpenter'
Wiþ him þer was dwelling' a pore scolere
Had lerned arte but' al his fantasie
Was turned forto lere Astrologie 3192
And cowde a certeyn of conclusions
To demen by interrogacioñs.
ȝif þat' men axed him incerteyn houres [leaf 45]
Whan þat' men shuld' haue drouȝte of shoures 3196
Or ȝif men axed him what' shuld' byfalle
Of euery þing' I may not' rekne alle
This tale was cleped hende Nicholas
Of derne loue and priue solas 3200
And þerto he was sclegh̄ and ful priue
And liche to a maiden meke to see
A chambre had he in þat' ostelrie
Allone wiþ-out' eny companye 3204
fful fetist' dight' wiþ herbes swote
And he hym self as swete as is þe rote
Of licorace or ony sytuale
His almagist' and bokes grete *and* smale 3208
His aster-laboure longinge for his arte
His awgryme stones layen ful faire aparte
On shelues couched at his beddes heuede
His presse ykeuered wiþ a falding' rede 3212
And al aboue þer lay a gay sautrie
On which̄ he made on nyghtes melodye
So swetely þat' al þe chambre ronge
And angelus ad virgine*m* he songe 3216
And after þat' he songe þe kingges note
fful ofte blessed was his mery þrote

And þus þe swete Clerk' his tyme spente
Aftere his frendes fynding' and his rente 3220
This Carpentere had wedded newe a wiff
Which þat' he loued more þan his liff
Of xviij. ȝere she was of age
Ielous he was and kept' hir' streit' in cage 3224
ffor she was wily and yonge and he was olde
And demed hym self to be like a Cukwolde
He knewe not' Caton for his wit' is rude
þat' bad man shuld' wedde his similitude 3228
Men shul wedde aftere her estate
ffor ȝouþe and elde is oft' at' debate
But sith he was fallen in þe snare [leaf 45, back]
He most' enduren as oþer folk his care 3232
ffair was þis yonge wif and þer wiþ all
As eny wesell her body gent' *and* small
A seynt' she wered barred al of silk'
A barmecloþe as white as morn[e] mylk' 3236
Vpon her lendes ful of mony a gore
White was hir smok' and enbrauded al byfore
And eke be-hinde on her coler' aboute
Of Cole-blak silk' with-Inne and eke wiþ-oute 3240
The tapes of hir' white volipere
Were of þe same sute of hir colere
Hir' Philett brode of silk *and* sette ful hie
And sikerly she had a lykerous ye 3244
fful smal ypulled were her browes twoo/
And þoo were bent' and blake as eny sloo/
She was more blisful on to se
þan is þe newe P*er*ient' tree 3248
And softer þan þe wolle is of eiþer'
And by hir' girdel henge a purs of leder'
Tasshed wiþ silk and perled with lato*un*
In al þis worlde to seke vp and do*un* 3252
Ther nys no man so wise þat' couþe penche
So gay a popelot' or [such] a wenche

fful brizt' was the shynyng' of her hwe
Than in þe toure þe noble forged newe 3256
But' of her songe it' was as loude *and* zerne
As eny swalowe sittinge on a beerne
þerto she couþe skippe and make a game
As eny kid or calf folowing' his dame 3260
Her mouþe was swete as braket or meth̄
Or horde of apples leide in hay or heth̄
Wynsinge she was as is a Ioly colt
Longe as a mast' and vpward' as a bolt' 3264
A broche she bare on her loue coler'
As brode as is þe boos of a bokelere
Her shoes were laised on her legges hie [leaf 46]
She was a Primerolł a Pigges nye 3268
ffor eny lorde to liggen in his bedde
Or zit' for eny [good] zeman to wedde
Now sir' and eft' sir'. and so bifelle þe caas
That' on a day þis heende Nicholas / 3272
ffelle wiþ þis yonge wif forto rage *and* play
While þat' her husbonde was at' osenay
As clerkes bene ful subtile and ful queynte
And prively he kauzt' hur' by þe queynte 3276
And seide ywis but' I haue my wille
ffor deerne loue of þe lemman I spille
And helde hure fast' by þe haunche bonys
And seide lemman my wiłł at' onys 3280
Or I wil die as god me saue
And she spronge as a colt' in traue
And wiþ her hede sche wried fast' away
She saide I wil not' kisse þe by my fay 3284
Wy labbe quod she latt be Nicholas
Or I wil crie out' harowe *and* alas
Do way zoure hondes for zour curtesie
This Nicholas gan mercy forto crie 3288
And spake so faire *and* profred him ful fast
þat' she her loue g*ra*unted hy*m* atte last'

And swoor hir' oope by seint' Thamas of kent'
That' she wolde bene at' his comaundement' 3292
Whan þat' she may hir' laizere wel aspie
Myn husbonde is so ful of Ielousie
Þat' but' ȝe waite wele *and* by prive
I woote riȝt' wel I ne am but' dede quod she 3296
Ȝe mote be ful deerne as in þis caas
Nay þerof care ȝou not' quod Nicholaas
A Clerk has liþerly bysette his while
But' ȝif he couþe a carpenter' begile 3300
And þus þei acorded and sworne
To awaite a tyme as I haue seide biforn̄
Whan Nicholas had' don̄ þus euery dele [leaf 46, back]
And twakked her aboute þe lendes welle 3304
He kisseþ her swete and takeþ his sautrie
And pleieþ fast' and makeþ melodye
Þan fille it þus þat to þe parissh̄ chirche
Cristes werkes for to wirche 3308
This good wif went' vpon an halyday
Hir' forhede shoon as briȝt' as eny day
So was it' wasshe whan she left' her work'
Now was þere of þe chirch̄ a parissh̄ clerk 3312
Þe which̄ was cleped absalon̄
Crulle was his heer' and as þe golde shone
And strouted as [a] fanne large *and* brode
fful streite and euene laie his Ioly shode 3316
His rudde was rede his eyen grey as goos
Wiþ Powles wyndowes corven in his shoos
In hosen rede he wente fetisly
I-clad he was ful smal and proprely 3320
Al in a kirtel of light' wagett
fful faire and þikke ben þe poyntes sette
And þer-vpon he had [a] gay surplise
As white as is þe blossom on [the] rise 3324
A mery child' he was so god me saue
Wel coude he late blood [and] clippe and shaue

And make a chartere of londe or a quyta*u*nce
In xx^{ti} maners coude he trippe *and* daunce 3328
After the scole of Oxenforde þoo
And wiþ his legges casten to and froo
And pleyen songes on a small rybibe
Some he songe a loude quynybe 3332
As as wel coude he pley on a gytern)
In al þe towne nas brewhous ne tauerñ
þat he ne viset' wiþ his solas
þer eny gailerd' tapster' was 3336
But' soth to sayn he was somdele squeymous
Of fartinge *and* of speche daungerous
This Absolon þat' was Ioly *and* gay [leaf 47]
Goþ wiþ a sensure on þe sonday 3340
Sensinge þe wyues of þe parissh fast'
And mony a louely loke on hem he cast'
And namely on þe Carpenters wiff
To loke on hyr' him þouȝt' a mery liff 3344
She was so p*ro*pre. swete. *and* likerous
I dar wel say and she had be a mous
And he a Catt' he wold' hire hent' anōn
This parissh̄ clerk' þis Ioly absoloñ 3348
Haþ in his herte such̄ a loue longynge
That' of no wiff toke he non offringe
For curtesie he seide he wolde none
The mone whan it' was nyȝt' briȝt' shone 3352
And absolon his gitern haþ [i]take
For p*ar*amours he þouȝte forto wake
And forþe he goþ Ielous and amerous
Til he come to þe Carpenter[e]s hous 3356
A litel aftere þe Cok' had ycrowe
And dressed hym vnder a shette wyndowe
That' was vpon þe Carpenter[e]s walle
He singeþ in his vois gentile *and* smalle 3360
Now dere lady ȝif þi wil be
I prei ȝou þat' ȝe wil rewe on me

Ful wel according' to his giternynge
This Carpentere a-woke and herd' hy*m* singe 3364
And spake vnto his wif and seide anoñ
What' alison herest' þou not' Absoloñ
þat' chaunteþ þus vndere our boures wall'
And she answerd' her husbond' þ*er* wiþ all' 3368
ȝis god wote Ioh̃n I here it' euery dele
þis passeþ forþ what' wil ȝe than but wele
ffro day to day þis Ioly absoloñ
So woweþ hire þat' hym was woo-bygoñ 3372
He wakeþ al þe nyȝt' and al þe day
He kembeþ his lockes brode and made he*m* gay
He woweþ hir' by menes and brocage [leaf 47, back]
And swoor he wolde bene her wne page 3376
He Syngeþ brokking' as a nyghtyngale
He sent' her pyment' Methe and spised ale
And wafres pyping hote out' of þe glede
And to hir' often he profered mede 3380
ffor some wil be wonnen for ricches
And some for strokes and some for gentilnesse
Somtyme to shewe his lightnesse and maisstrie
He pleieth herawdes vpon a scaffold' hie 3384
But what' availleþ him as in þis caas
So loueth she þis hende Nicholaas
That' Absolon may blawe þe buk*e* horñ
He ne had for his labour but' a scorñ 3388
And þus she makeþ absolon her Ape
Al his eernest t*ur*neþ but' to a Iape
ffor soþe þis prouerbe it' is no lye
Men seien þus alway þe nyȝt*e* sclie 3392
Makeþ þe feer loue to be loth̃
ffor þouȝe þat' absolon be wode or wroth̃
By cause þat' he fer was from her siȝt'
This Niȝt*e* Nicholas stode in his liȝt' 3396
Nowe bere ȝou wel thou hende Nicholas/
ffor absolon may waille *and* singe allas

And so by-felle it' on a Saterday
This Carpentere was gone to Osnay 3400
And hende Nicholas and Alisoñ
Accorded were to þis conclusioñ
þat' Nicholas shal shapen hym a wile
This sely Ielous husbonde to begile 3404
And if so be þe game went' a riȝt'
She shulde sclepe in his arme al þat' nyȝt'
For þis [was] his desire and hers also
And riȝt' anon wiþ-oute wordes moo/ 3408
This Nicholas no lenger wold tarie
But' doþ ful softe into his chamber carie
Both̄ mete and drinke for a daye or tweye [leaf 48]
And to hir' husbonde bad hir' for to seie 3412
If þat' he asked after Nicholas
She shulde seie she nyst' not' wher he was
Of al þat' day she see hym not' wiþ ye
She trowed þat' he was in maladye 3416
ffor no crie her maide can calle
He nolde answere for nouȝt' that' may bifalle
This passeþ forþ al þe Saterday
That' Nicholas stille in his bed lay 3420
And ete and slepte and [dede] what' hym lest'
Til sonday þat' þe sonne goþ to rest'
This sely Carpenter' haþ grete mervaile
Of Nicholas or what' þing' myȝt' hym aile 3424
And saide I am a-drad by seynt' Thomas
It' stondeth not' a-riȝt' wiþ Nicholas
God shilde þat' he deyed sodenily
This world is nowe ful tikil sikerly 3428
I seghe to-day a coors born to chirche
That' now on monday I segh̄ fast' wirche
Go vp quod he to his knaue anoñ
Clepe at' his door or knokke wiþ a stoñ 3432
Loke howe it' is and telle me boldely
þis knaue went' him vp ful sturdely

And at' the Chamber door while þ*a*t he stode
He cried an knokked as he were wode 3436
What' howe what' do ȝe maist*er* Nicholay
Howe may ȝe sclopen al þis longe day
But al for nouȝt' he herd neuer a word
An hoole he foonde ful lowe vnder a bord 3440
Ther as þe Catt was wonte forto crepe
And at' þe hole he loked in ful depe
And atte last' he had of him a siȝt
þis Nicholas satte eu*er*e gaping' vp riȝt 3444
As he had kiked on þe newe moone
And doune he goþ and told his maister' sone
In what araie he segh̄ þat' ilk*e* man [leaf 48, back]
This carpentere to blissen hy*m* by-gan 3448
And seide helpe vs seint' ffredeswyde
A man wote litel what' shal hy*m* betide
This man is fallen wiþ his astronomye
In some woodnesse or in some Agonye 3452
I þouȝt' wel howe it' shuld be
Men shuld not' knowe of goddis privete
ȝe blessed be alway þe lewde man
þat' nouȝt' but' only his bileeue can 3456
So ferde anoþer clerk with astronomye
He walked into þe feeldes for to prie
Vpon þe sterres to wit' what' shal by-falle
Til he was in a Marle pitte yfalle 3460
He seighe noȝt' but' yit' by seint' Thomas
Me rueþ soor hende Nicholas
He schal be rated of his stodying'
If þat' I may by Ih*esu*[1] heuene knyge [[1] MS Ihc] 3464
Gete me a staf þat' I may vnderspore
While þat' þou Robyn heuest' vp þe dore
He shal out' of his stodying' as I gesse
And to þe Chamber dore he gan hy*m* dresse 3468
His knaue was a stronge Carle for þe nones
And by þe haspe he haue it' vp at' ones

Into þe floor þe door fille anoñ
This Nicholas sat' ay stille as stoñ 3472
And euere gaped vpward' into þe eire
þis carpenter' wende he were in despeir'
And hent' hym by þe shuldres myȝtely
And shoke him hard' and cried spitously 3476
What' Nicholay what' loke adoun
A-wake and þenk on cristes passio*un*
I crouche þe from eveles and fro wiȝtes
þer-with þe nyȝt' spelle he seide anoñ riȝtes 3480
On four halues of the hous aboute
And on þe thresshhold' on þe dore w*ith*oute
Ih*es*u crist' and seynt' Benedight' [leaf 49]
Blesse þis hous from euery wicked wight' 3484
ffor þe nyghtes verye þe white pater nost*er*
Where wentestowe . seynt' Peters suster'
And atte last' þis hende Nicholas
Gan for to sighe sore and seide allas 3488
Shal al þe world be loste eftsones nowe
This Carpentere answerde what' seist' þowe
What' þenk on god as we doñ þat' swynk'
This Nicholas answerd*e* focche me drink' 3492
And aftere I wil speke in privete
Of certeyn þing' þat' towcheþ þe and me
I wille telle it' noon oþer man cereteyne
This carpenter' goþ do*un* and co*mm*eþ ageyne 3496
And brouȝt' of myghty ale a large quarte
And whan þat' eche of hem had dronke his parte
þis Nicholas his door fast' shette
And doun þe Carpenter' by hym he sette 3500
And seide Iohñ myn hooste lief and dere
þow shalt vpon þi trouþ swere me heere
That' to no wight' þou shalt' þis counseꝑ wrey
ffor it' is cristes counsaile þat' I sey 3504
And if þu telle it' man þou art' forlore
ffor þis vengeannce þou shalt' haue þ*er*fore

þat' if þow wrey me þou shalt' be wode
¶ Nay crist' forbede it' for his holy blood' 3508
Quod þoo þis sely man I ne am no labbe
Ne þoughñ I seie it' I ne am not' lief to gabbe
Sey what' þowe wolt' I shal it' neuer' telle
To Childe ne wif by hym þat' harowed helle 3512
Nowe Iohñ quod Nicholas I wil not' lie
I haue yfounden in myn astrologie
As I haue loked in þe mone briȝt'
þat' nowe on monday next' a quarter nyȝt' 3516
Shal falle a rayn and þat' so wild' *and* wode
þat' half' so grete was never noes flode
This world' he saide in lasse þan in an houre [leaf 49, back]
Shal al be dreint' so hidous is þe showre 3520
Thus shal mankinde drenche and lese her liff
This Carpentere answerd' allas my wiff
And shal she drenche allas myñ alisoun
ffor sorowe of þis he fille al-most' adoun 3524
And seide is no remedye in þis caas
Wy ȝis for god quod heende Nicholas
If þow wolte worchen aftere lore and rede
þowe maist' not' worchen after' þine owne hede 3528
ffor þus seith salomon þat' was ful trewe
Worche al by counsaile *and* þou shalt' not' rewe
And if þou worchen wolt' by good counsaille
I vndertake wiþ-outen mast' or saille 3532
ȝit' shal I saue hir' *and* þe and mee
Hast' þou not' herd' how saued was Noe
Whan þat' our lorde haþ warned hym byforn
þat' al the world' wiþ water' shuld be lorñ 3536
ȝis quod þis Carpenter ful ȝore a-goo
Hastowe not' herde quod Nicholas also
þe sorowe of Noe wiþ his felawship
Or he myȝt' gete his wif to ship 3540
Hym had leuere I dar wel vndertake
At' þilke tyme þan alle his weþeres blake

þat' she had a ship hure self allōn
And þerfor woostowe what' is best' to doñ 3544
Thix axeth hast' and of an hastif þinge
Men may not' preche or make taryinge
Anoon go gete vs fast' into þis Inne
A knedinge trough̄ or ellis a kemelyne 3548
ffor eche of vs but' loke þat' þei bene large
In whiche men mowe swymme as in a barge
And han her vitailles suffisaunt'
But' for a day fye on þe remen*aun*t' 3552
þe water' shal a-slake and goñ a-way
Aboute pryme vpon þe next*e* day
But' Robyne may not' wit' of þis þi knaue [leaf 50]
Ne eke þi maide Gill̄ I may not' saue 3556
Axe not' why for þouȝe þou axe me
I wil not' tellen goddes p*ri*uete
It' suffiseþ þe but' if þi wittes madde
To haue as grete a grace as Noe hadde 3560
þi wif shal I wel saue out' of doute
Go nowe þi way and spede þe here aboute
But whan þou hast' for hir' *and* þe *and* me
ygeten vs þise kneding' treies þre 3564
þan shalt' þou honge hem in þe roof' ful hie
þat' no man of oure p*ur*ueau*n*ce espie
And whan þou þus hast' doñ as I haue seide
And hast' oure vitaile faire in hem y-leide 3568
And eke an axe to smyte þe cord' a two
Whan þat' þe water co*m*meþ þat' we may goo
And broke and hole on high̄ vpon the gable
Vnto þe gardyne ward' ouer þe stable 3572
þat' we may frely passen forþ our waye
Whan þat' þe grete shoure is passed awaye
Than shalt' þou swy*mm*e as mery I vndertake
As doþ þe wight' duk aftere þe drake 3576
þan wol I clepe how alisoñ. howe Iohn̄
Be mery for þe flood wil passe anōn

And þowe wilt' seyn heil Maister Nicholay
Good morowe I see þe wele for it' is day 3580
And þan shal we be lordes al oure lif
Of alle þe world' as Noe and his wif
But' þat' of oo þing' I warne þe ful riȝt
Be wel avised on þat' ilk[e] nyȝt' 3584
þat' we bene entred into þe shippes boord'
þat noon of vs ne speke not' a word'
Ne Clepe ne crie but' bene in his preire
ffor it' is goddis owe heeste dere 3588
Thi wif and þou mote honge fer atwynne
ffor þat' bitwix ȝou shal be no synne
No more in loking' þan þer shal in dede [leaf 50, back]
þis ordin*aun*ce is seide so god þe spede 3592
To morowe at' nyght' whan men bene all a-slepe
Into our kneding' trowes wil we crepe
And sitten þer abidinge goddis grace
Go nowe þi way I haue no lenger space 3596
To make of þis no lenger sermonyng'
Men seyn þus sende þe wise *and* say no þinge
þou art' so wise it' nedede þ þe not' teche
Go saue our lif and þat' I þe biseche 3600
¶ This sely Carpentere goþ forþ his way
fful oft' he seide alas and wayleway
And to his wif he tolde his priuete
And she was war and knewe it' bet' þan he 3604
What' al þis queinte cast' was for to saye
But' nathelees she feerde as she wold' deye
And saide alas go foorþ þi way añon
Helpe vs to scape or we bene dede echoñ 3608
I am þi trewe verry wedded wiff'
Go dere spouse and helpe to saue our lif'
Lo swich a grete þing' is affectiōn
Men may dye for ymaginaciōn 3612
So depe may impression be take
This sely Carpenter' bygynneþ quake

Hym þenkeþ verrely þat' he may se
Noe flood come walking' as þe See 3616
To drenchen alison his hony dere
He wepeth weilleth and maketh sori chere
He sigheþ wiþ mony a sory swoughh̄
And gooþ and geteþ hym a knedinge troughh̄ 3620
And aftere a Tubbe and a kemelyne
And prively he sent' hem to his Inne
And henge hem in þe roof in privete
His owne honde he made eke ledders þre 3624
To clymben by þe ronges *and* þe stalkes
Vnto þe tubbes hongyng' in þe balkes/
And hem vitailled boþ[e] trouȝe and tubbe [leaf 51]
Wiþ brede. wiþ chese wiþh good ale in a Iubbe 3628
Suffisinge riȝt' ynowe as for a day
But' er he had made al þis aray
He sent' his knaue and eke his wenche alsoo
Vpon his nede to Londoñ for to goo 3632
¶ And on þe Monday whan it' drouȝe to nyȝt'
He shette his door wiþ-outen candel liȝt'
And dressed al þing' as it' shuld be
And shortely clumben vp al þre 3636
þei seiten stille wel a forlonge way
Now Pat*er* n*oster* Clum seide Nicholay
And Clum quod Ioh̄n. and clum seide Alisoñ
This Carpentere seide his devociōn 3640
And stille he sitte and biddeþ his preier'
Awaitinge on þe reyne if he it' here
The deþe sleep for wery bisynesse
ffille on þis Carpent*er* riȝt' as I gesse 3644
Aboute Curfewe tyme or litel more
ffor travaile of his goost' he groneþ sore
But' ofte he routed for his hede myslay
Doun of þe ledder stalkeþ Nicholay 3648
And Alisoñ ful softe adoune she spedde
Wiþ-outen wordes moo þei goñ to bedde

þer as þe Carpenter' is wonte to lye
þer was þe reuel and þe melodye 3652
And þus lith alison and Nicholas
In busynes of myrth̃ *and* of solas
Til þat' þe belle of laudes gan to rynge
And freres in þe chaunsel gan to singe 3656
¶ This Parissh̃ clerk þis amorous absoloñ
þat' is for loue alway so woo bygoñ
Vpon þe Monday was at' Oseney
Wiþ Company him to disport' *and* pley 3660
And axed vpon a caas a Cloystrere
fful prively after Ioh̃n þe Carpentere
And he drowe hym apart' out' of þe chirch̃ [leaf 51, back]
And seide I note I seghe hym here not wirch̃ 3664
Siþ saterday I trowe þat he be went'
ffor tymbre þer oure abbot' haþ hym sent'
ffor he is wonte for tymbre forto goo
And dwellen at' þe graunge a day or twoo 3668
Or ellis he is at' his hous certeyn
Wher þat' he be I can not' soþly seyn
This absolon ful Ioly was *and* liȝt'
And þought' now is tyme to wake al nyght' 3672
ffor sikerly I segh̃ hym not' stirenge
Abouten his door siþ day bygan to springe
So mote I thrive I shal atte Cockes crowe
fful priuely knokken at' his wyndowe 3676
þat' stant' ful lowe vpon his bowres walle
To Alison now wil I tellen alle
My loue longyng' for þat' I shal not' mysse
þat' at' þe leeste wey I shal hir' kisse 3680
Som manere comfort' shal I haue parfay
My mouþe haþ icched al þis longe day
þat' is a signe of kissing' atte leest
Al nyght' me met' eek I was at' a fest' 3684
þer-for I wil goo sclepe an hour or twey
And al þe nyght' þan wil I wake *and* pley

Whan þat' þe firste cok haþ crowe anoñ
Vp stert' þis Ioly louer absoloñ 3688
And hym araied gay and poynt' devise
But' first' he sheweþ greyn *and* licorise
To smellen swote er he had kempt' his here
Vndere his tunge a trewe loue he bere 3692
ffor þerby wende he to be gracious
He roomeþ to the Carpenters hous
And stille he stant' vndere þe shot' wyndowe
Vnto his brest' it' raught' it' was so lowe 3696
And soft' he kougheþ wiþ a semy soune
What' do ȝe hony combe swete alisoun
My faire brid my swete Synamome [leaf 52]
A-waikeþ lemman myne *and* spekeþ to me 3700
fful litel þenken ȝe vpon my woo
þat' for ȝoure loue I swete as I goo
No wonder is þouȝe that' I swelt' or swete
I mourne as doþ þe lombe after þe tete 3704
I-wis leuman I haue such loue-longyng'
þat' like a turtel trewe is my mo*ur*nynge
I may not' eten no more þan a maide
Go fro þe wyndowe Iak fool she seide 3708
So god me spede it' wil not' be compame
I loue anoþer and ellis I were to blame
Wel bet' þan þe by Ih*es*u absolon
Go forþ þi waie or I wil cast' a stoñ 3712
And lat' me slepe a twenty deuelway
Alas quod absolon and weyloway
That' trewe loue was euere so euel bysette
Than kisse me siþ it' may be no bette 3716
ffor Ih*esus*[1] loue and for þe loue of me [1 MS Ihc̄]
Wilt' þou þan go þi waie þer-with quod she
ȝe Certes lemman quod þis absolon
þan make þe redy quod she I come anoñ 3720
[. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
This absolon doune sette hym on his knees

And seid I am a lord at alle degrees 3724
ffor aftere þis I hope þer com*m*eth more
Lemman þi grace and swete brid þine ore
The wyndowe she vndoþ and þat in haste
Haue doo quod she come of and spede þe faste 3728
Lest þat our neigheboures þe espie
þis absolon gan wipe his mouþ ful drie
Derk was þe nyght as picch or as þe cole
And at þe wyndowe out she putt her hole 3732
And absolon him felle no bette ne wers
But wiþ his mouþe he kissed her naked ers
fful sauourly er he was ware of þis
Abak he sterte and þought it was amys 3736
ffor wel he wist a womman haþ no berde [leaf 52, back]
He felt a þing al roughe and longe yherede
And seide fye alas what haue I doo
Ti he quod she and clapt þe wyndowe to/ 3740
And absolon goþ forþ a forþer paas
A beerd a beerd seide hende Nicholaas
By goddes corpus þis goþ faire *and* well
This sely absolon herde it euery dell 3744
And on his lippe he gan for anger bite
And to him self he seide I shal þe quyte
Who rubbeth nowe who freteth nowe his lippes
Wiþ dust wiþ sonde wiþ strawe wiþ cloþ w*ith* chippes/
But absolon that seiþ ful oft allas 3749
My soule bitake I to Sathanas
But me were leuere þan al þis toune q*uo*d he
Of þis despite a-wroken forto be 3752
Allas quod he allas I ne had ybleynt
His hote love is cold *and* al yqueynt
ffor fro þat tyme þat he had kist her ers
Of p*ar*amours he sette not a kers 3756
ffor he was heled of his malady
fful oft p*ar*amours he gan defie
And wepeþ as doþ a child þat is ybete
A soft*e* paas he went ouer þe strete 3760

Vnto a smyth men clepen dann Gervase
That in his forge smyteþ plowh harnase
He sharpeth share and culter bisily
This absolon knokkeþ al Esily 3764
And seide vnto Gervays and þat anon
What who art þou it am I absolon
What Absolon. what cristes swete tre
Why rise ȝe so rathe .o benedicite 3768
What eileþ ȝou som gay gerle god it wote
Haþ brouȝt ȝou þus [up]on þe Vyritote
By seynt Noet ȝe whote wele what I mene
þis Absolon ne rouȝte not a bene./ 3772
Of al þis pley no word aȝein he gaf [leaf 53]
He had more towe on his dystaf
þan Gervais knewe and seide frende so dere
þe hote Cultere in þe Chymeney here 3776
As lene it me I haue þerwiþ to doñ
I wil bringe it a-geyn ful sone
Gervais answerd certes were it gold
Or in a poke nobles al vntold 3780
Thou shuldest haue as I am trewe smyth
A cristes foo what wil ȝe do þerwith
Therof quod absolon be as be may
I shal tellen it þe to morowe day 3784
And caught þe Culter by þe colde stele
fful soft out atte door he gan stele
And went vnto þe Carpentere walle
He koughed first and knokked þer wiþ all 3788
Vppon þe wyndowe right as he did eere
þis Alison answerde who is þere
þat knokkeþ so I waraunt it a þeef
We nay quod he god wote my swete leef 3792
I am þine absolon þine derlinge
Of gold quod he I haue þe brouȝt a rynge
My modere ȝaue it me so god me saue
fful fyn it is and þerto wel ygraue 3796

This wil I ȝeuen þe if þowe me kisse
þis Nicholas was risen forto pisse
And þouȝt' he wold' amenden al þe Iape
He shulde kisse his ers er þat' he scape 3800
And vp þe wyndowe did he hastely
And out' his ers he putteþ priuely
Ouer þe buttok to þe haunche boñ
And þerwiþ spake þis clerk þis absolone 3804
Speke swete bridde I not' wher þou art'
þis Nicholas anoñ lete fleigh̃ a fart'
As grete as it' had bene a þonder dent'
þat' wiþ þe stroke he was almost' yblent' 3808
And he was redy wiþ his yren hote [leaf 53, back]
And Nicholas in þe ers he smote
Of goþ þe skyn an honde brede aboute
þe hote culter brenned so his toute 3812
And for þe smerte he wende forto deye
As he were wood for woo he gan to crye
Help water water helpe for goddys hert'
This Carpenter' out' of his slomber stert' 3816
And herde oon crien water' as he were wode
And þouȝt' allas now commeth noes flode
He sette hym vp wiþout[e] wordes moo
And wiþ an axe he smote þe cord' a two 3820
And doun goþ alle he fonde neiþer to selle
Brede nor Ale til he com to þe selle
Vpon þe floor *and* ther a swoun he lay
Vp stert' hir Alison and Nicholay 3824
And criden out' and horowe in þe strete
þe neighbours boþ smale and grete
Ronnen forto gawren on þis man
þat a swonn lay boþ pale and wan 3828
ffor wiþ þat' falle he brusten haþ his arme'
But' stonden he most' vnto his owne harme
ffor whan he spak he was anoñ born doun
Wiþ hende Nicholas and alisoun 3832

Thei tolde euery man þat he was wode
He was agast' so of þe Noes flode
Þorgh fantasie þat' of his vanyte
He had ybouȝt' hy*m* kneding' tubbes þre 3836
And had hem honged in þe roof aboue
And þat' he preied hy*m* for goddys loue
To sitten in þe roof par companye
þe folk gan laughen at his fantasie 3840
And to the Roof þei kepen and þei gape
And turned al his harme vnto a Iape
ffor what' so þis Carpenter' answerd'
It was for nouȝt no man his resoñ herd' 3844
Wiþ oþes grete he was so sworn a do*u*n [leaf 54]
That' he was holden woode in al þat' to*u*n
ffor eu*er*e clerk anoon riȝt' helde wiþ oþer
þei seide þe man is wood my leue broþer 3848
And eu*er*e wighť gan laughen at' his strif
Thus swyued was þe Carpenter[e]s wiff
ffor al his keping' and his Ielousie
And Absalon haþ kissed her nethere ye 3852
And Nicholas is scalded in his toute
This tale is doñ and god saue al þe route.
¶ **Here endeþ þe mylers tale.**

[*No break in the MS.*]

¶ And þus bygynneþ þe P*rol*oge of þe Reues tale ¶ Cap. 3m.

Whan folk han laughen at' þis nyce cas
Of absolon and hende Nicholas 3856
Dyuers folk dyuersly þei seide
But' for þe more parte þei louȝe *and* pleide
Ne at' þis tale I seghe no man hy*m* greue
But' it' were only Oswold' þe Reue 3860
Bycause he was of Carpenter[e]s craft'
A litel Ire in his hert*e* laft'
He gan to grucch*e* and blamed it a lite
So thick quod he ful wele quouþ I þe quyte 3864
Wiþ blering' of a proude Millers ye
If þat' me list' to speke of Ribawdye
But' ik am olde me list' not' pley for age
Gras tyme is done my foder is forage 3868
This white top writeþ myn olde ȝeeres
Myn hert' is al so mowled as myn heeres
But if I fare as doþ an open-ers
þat' ilk*e* fruyte is euer lenger þe wers 3872
Til it be roten in Mullok or in stre
We olde men I drede so fare we
Til we be roten can we not' be ripe
We hopen alway while þe hert' wil pipe 3876
ffor in our wille þer stikketh euer a naile
To haue an hoor heer and a grene taile
As haþ a leke for þough our myȝt be goñ [leaf 54, back]
Our wille desireþ foly euer in oon 3880
ffor whan we may not' doñ þan wil we speke
ȝit' in oure asshed olde is fire yreke
ffour gledes han we whicñ I shal deuyse
Au*au*ntinge lying'. angre. and coueitise 3884
Thise four sp*ar*kles longeþ vnto elde
Our olde lymes may wel bene vnwelde

But wil ne shal not faille þat is sothh
And ȝit haue I alwaye a coltes tothh 3888
As mony ȝere as it is passed henne
Siþ þat my tap of lif byganne to renne
ffor sikerly wha*n* I was born anōn
Deþ drough þe tappe of lif and lete it goñ 3892
And euere siþen haþ so þe tap yronne
Til at almost al empty is þe tonne
The strem of lif now droppeþ on þe chymbe
þe sely tunge may wel rynge and chymbe 3896
Of wrecchednesse þat passed is ful yore
Wiþ olde folk saue dotage is no more
¶ Whan þat our ooste had herde þis sermonynge
He gan to speke as lordly as a kinge 3900
He seide what amounteþ al þis witte
What shal we speke alday of holy writte
The deuel made a Reue forto preche
Or of a Souter shipman or a lecche 3904
Say forþ þi take and tary not þe tyme
Loo Depford and it is almost prime
Lo Grenwich þ*a*t mony a shrewe is Inne
It were hie tyme þi tale forto bygynne 3908
¶ Now Sirs quod þis Oswold þe Reue
I prei ȝou al þat ȝe ȝou not greue
þouȝe I answere and somdele sette hys houwe
ffor leeful it is wiþ force. force of shouwe 3912
This dronken Miller haþ ytolde vs here
Hou þat bigiled was a Carpentere
P*er*auent*ur*e in scorn for I am ooñ [leaf 55]
And by ȝoure leue I shal hy*m* quyte anoñ 3916
Riȝt in his Cheerles teermes wil I speke
I prei to god his nekke mot alto-breke
He can wel in myn ye seen a stalk
But in his owne he can not seen a balk 3920
¶ **Thus endeþ þe Prologe of þe Reue**

And here bygynneþ þe Reeues tale

At Trumpingtoñ not fer fro Caunterbruge
Ther goþ a broke and over þat a bruge
Vpon þe whiche broke þer stonte a melle
And þis is verrey soþ þat I ȝou telle 3924
A Millere was þere dwelling mony a day
As ony Pecok he was proude and gay
Pipen he couþe an fisshen and nettes bete
And turne Coppes *and* wel wrastel and shete 3928
Ny by his belt he bare a longe panade
And of a swerd ful trenchañt was þe blade
A Ioly popper bere he in his pouche
Ther nas no man for perile durst hym touche 3932
A Sheffeld thwytel bere he in his hose
Rounde was his face and camoyse was his nose
As pilled as an ape was his sculle
He was a market beter atte fulle 3936
þer nas no wight þat durst hond on hym legge
But if he swore he shuld anoñ abegge
A theef he was forsoþ of corn and mele
And þat a sleegh̃ and vsaunt forto stele 3940
His name was hoten deyneȝouse Symkyn
A wif he hadde commen of nobel kyn
The personñ of þe toune her fader was
Wiþ hir he ȝaue ful mony a panne of bras 3944
ffor þat Symkyn shuld in his blood allie
She was yfostred in a nonrie
ffor Symkyn wold[e] no wif as he seide
But she were wel ynorshed and a mayde 3948
To Sauen his Astate of ȝemanrie [leaf 55, back]
And she was proude and peert as is a pie
A ful feire sight was it vpon hem twoo/
On holy daies byforn hir wold he goo/ 3952

Wiþ his typet bounden aboute his hede
And she come aftere in a gite of rede
And Symkyn had[de] hosen of þe same
þer durst no wiȝt clepe hur but dame 3956
Was noon so hardy þat went by þe way
þat wiþ hir dorst ones rage or play
But if he wold be sclayn of Symkyn
Wiþ panade and wiþ knyf or boydekyn 3960
ffor Ielous folk ben perylous euermoo
Algates þei wolde her wyues wenden soo
And eke for she was somdeꝗ smot*er*lich
She was as digne as water in a dich 3964
As ful of hoker and of bismare
Hire þouȝt*e* þat a lady shuld hir spare
What for her kynrede and her nortelrie
þat she had lerned in þe Nonerie 3968
A douȝtere had[de] þei bitwene hem twoo
Of xx^ti ȝere wiþ-outen ony moo/
Sauyng a childe þat was of half ȝere age
In cradel it lay and was a p*ro*pre page 3972
This wenche thik and wel ygrowe was
Wiþ Camoys nose and eyen as grey as glas
Wiþ buttokes brode and brestes round *and* hie
But riȝt faire was hur heor I wil not lye 3976
¶ The p*er*son of þe toune for she was so faire
In p*ur*poos was to make hir his aire
Boþ of his Cateꝗ and of his messuage
And straunge he made it of hur mariage 3980
His p*ur*poos was to bystowe hir hie
Into som worþi blood of Auncetrie
ffor holy churches good most be despended/
On holy chirche blood þat is descended/ 3984
Therfore he wolde his holy blood hono*ur*e [leaf 56]
þoo þat he holy churche shulde dev*ou*re
Grete soken haþ þis mellere out of doute
W*ith* whete and malt of al þe londe aboute 3988

And namely *þer* was a grete colege
Men clepen þe solere halle atte Cauntebrigge
Ther was her whete and eke her malt' ygrounde
And on a day it' happed in a stounde 3992
Sik lay þe manciple on a maladie
Mon wenden wishly þat' he shuld[e] dye
ffor whiche þe Millere stale boþ mele *and* corn
An hundred tyme more þan byforn̄ 3996
ffor þer byforne he stale but' curteisly
But' nowe he was a þeef outrageously
ffor which̄ þe wardeyne chidde *and* made fare
But' þerof sette þe Millere not' a tare 4000
He craked booste and swore it was not' soo/
þan were þere youge scolers two
That' dwelten in þe halle of which̄ I seie
Teestif þei were and lusty forto pleye 4004
And only for her merth̄ *and* reverye
Vpon þe wardeyn bisily þei crie
To ȝeue hem leue but' a litel stounde
To goo to melle and se her corn y-grounde 4008
And hardely þei dorst' lay her nekke
þe Millere shuld' not' stele hem half a pekke
Of corn ne by sleight' ne by force hem reue
And at' þe last' þe wardeyn ȝaf hem leue 4012
Iohn̄ hight' þat' oon an Aleyn hiȝt' þat oþer'
Of oon toune were þei born þat' hight[e] strother'
fferre in þe norþe I can not' telle where
This Aleyn makeþ redy al his gere 4016
And on an hors þe sak he cast' anōn
fforþ goþ Aleyn þe Clerc' and also Ioh̄n
Wiþ good swerde and bokeler' by her side
Ioh̄n knewe þe way hy*m* neded no gyde 4020
And atte Mille þe Sak a doune he laith̄ [leaf 56, back]
Alayn spake first' alhaille Symonde in faiþ
How fareþ þi fare douȝtere and þi wiff
Aleyn welcome quod Symkyn be my liff' 4024

And Iohn also how nowe what do ȝe here
By god quod Iohn Symond nede haþ no pere
Hym byhoueþ serue hym self þat haþ no swayn
Or ellis he is a fool as clerkes sayne 4028
Our manciple I hope he wil be dede
Swa worchen hym ay þe wanges in his hede
And þerfore is I commen and eke Aleyn
To Grynde our corn and carie hit hom ageyn 4032
We prey ȝou spede vs hepen þat ȝe may
It shal be done quod Symkyn be my fay
What wil ȝe done while þat it is in hande
By God riȝt by the hoper wil I stande 4036
Quod Iohn and see how gates þe corn goþ Inne
ȝit sagh I neuere be my fadere kynne
How þat þe hoper waggeþ til *and* fraye
Aleyn Answerd Iohan wiltowe swaye 4040
þan wil I be bynepe by my croune
And se howe gate the mele falles adoun
Into þe trough þat shal be my disport
Quod Iohn in faath I may bene of ȝour sorte 4044
I is as il a Miller as is ȝe
This Millere smyled of her nycete
And þouȝt al þis is doñ but for a wile
þei wene þat no man may hem bygyle 4048
But by my þrift ȝit shal I blere her ye
ffor al þe sleiȝt in her philosophie
The more queynte Clerkes þat þei make
þe more wil I stele whan I take 4052
In stede of floure ȝit wil I ȝeue hem brenne
The grettest clerkes ben not þe wisest men
As whilom to þe wolf þus spake þe mare
Of alle her arte counte I nouȝt a tare 4056
Out at þe Dore he goþ ful priuely [leaf 57]
Whan þat he seghe his tyme softely
He lokeþ vp and doune til he haþ founde
The Clerkes hors þer as he stode ybounde 4060

Behinde þe mylle vndere a leueselle
And to þe hors he goþ hym faire and welle
He strepeþ of þe bridel riȝt' anōn
And whan þe hors is louse he gynneþ to goñ 4064
Toward' þe fenne where wilde Mares renne
And forþe-wiþ þorgh̄ þikke and þorgh̄ þenne
This Mellere goþ ageyn no word he seide
But' doþ his note and wiþ þise clerkes pleide 4068
Til þat' her corn was faire and welle ygrounde
And whan þe mele is sakked and ybounde
This Iohñ goþ oute and fonde her hors away
And gan to crie harowe and walowway 4072
Our hors is lost' aleyn for goddis banes/
Steppe on þi fete come of man / al at' anes
Allas our wardeyn haþ our palfray lorñ
This Aleyn forgate boþ mele and corñ 4076
Al was out' of his mynde his husbondrie
What' whilk' way is he goñ he gan to crie
þe wif come lepinge inward' at a renne
She seide alas ȝoure hors goþ to þe fenne 4080
With̄ wilde mares as fast' as he may goo
Vnþonke come on his honde þat' bonde hym soo/
And he þat' better shuld' haue knette þe reyñ
Allas quod Iohñ Aleyn for cristes peyñ 4084
Lay doune þi swerde and I wil myn alswaa
I is ful swift god wate as is a Raa
By goddes hert' he shal not' scape vs bathe
Whi ne had þou putte þe Capel in þe lathe 4088
Ilhaile by god Aleyn þou is a fonne
Thise sely clerkes han ful fast' yronne
Touard' þe fenne boþen aleyñ an eke Iohñ
And whan þe Miller' segh̄ þat' þei were goñ 4092
He half a busshel of her floure haþ take [leaf 57, back]
And bad his wif go knede it' in a cake
And seide I trowe þe clerkes weren a-ferde
ȝit' kan a Miller make a clerkes beerde 4096

ffor al her arte ȝit' lat' hem goñ her way
Lo wher þei gon ȝe lat' þe children play
They gete him not' so lightly by my croun
Thise sely clerkes rennen vp and doun 4100
With kepe. kepe. stonde. stonde. Iossa warderere
Ga qwistel ȝou I shal kepe hy*m* here
But' shortely til it' was verrey nyȝt
þei couþe not' þoughe þei did al her myȝt' 4104
þeire Capel cauche he ranne alway so fast'
Til in a dicche þei caught' him at þe last'
Wery and wete as beestis in þe reyne
Co*m*meþ sely Iohñ and wiþ hym co*m*meþ aleyñ 4108
Allas quod Iohñ þe day þat' I was born̄
Nowe are we dryuen til heþing' *and* to scorn̄
Our corn is stolle men wil vs foles calle
Boþ þe wardeyn and our felawes alle 4112
And namely þe Meller' weylawaye
þus pleyneþ Iohñ as he goþ by þe waye
Toward' the Melle and baiard' in his honde
The Millere sitting' by þe fire he fonde 4116
ffor it' was nyght' and ferþer myght' he nouȝt'
But' for þe loue of god þei hy*m* bisouȝt'
Of harborowe and of ease as for her penye
þe Millere seide aȝein if þer be enye 4120
Such̄ as it' is ȝete shal ȝe haue ȝoure parte
Myn hous is streite but' ȝe han lerned arte
ȝe can by argumente make a place
A myle brode of xx^ti fete of space 4124
Lat' se nowe if þis place may suffise
Or make it rowmer wiþ speche as is ȝo*ur* gise
Now Symond' seide þis Iohñ be seynt' Cutberd'
Ay is þou mery. and þat is faire answerde 4128
I haue herde seye men shal taken of two þingges [leaf 58]
Such̄ as he fint' or take such̄ as he bringes
But specialy I prey þee hooste dere
Gete vs some mete and drink and make vs chere 4132

And we wil paien trewly atte fulle
Wiþ empty hondes men may not' haukes tulle
Lo here our siluer redy forto spende
This Mellere to þe toune his douȝter sende 4136
ffor Ale and brede and rosted hem a goos
And bonde her hors for he shuld no more go loos
And in his owne chambre he made a bedde
Wiþ shetes and wiþ chalons faire yspredde 4140
Nouȝt' from his owne bedde .x. fete or xij.
His doughter had a bed al by hir' selue
Riȝt in þe same chambre by *and* by
It myghte be no bette and cause why 4144
þer was no rommer herborowe in þe place
þei soupen and þei speken hem to solace
And drynken euere stronge ale atte beste
About' mydnyȝt' went' þei to reste 4148
Wel haþ þis Mellere vernyssed his hede
fful pale he was for-dronken and not' rede
He ȝeskeþ and he spekeþ þorgh̄ þe nose
As he ware in þe quakke or on þe pose 4152
To bedde he gooþ and wiþ hy*m* goþ his wif
As eny Iaye he light' was and Iolif
So was her Ioly whistel wel ywette
þe Cradel at' her beddis fete is ysette 4156
To Rokken and to ȝeue þe child' to souke
And whan þat' dronken was al in þe crouke
To bedde went' þe doughter riȝt' anōn
To bedde goþ Aleyn and also Ioh̄n 4160
þer nas no more hem neded no dwale
This Mellere haþ so wisly bebbed ale
þat' as an hors he snorteþ in his slepe
Ne of his tale behynde he toke no kepe 4164
His wif bare him a Burdoñ a ful stronge [leaf 58, back]
Men myght' here þe routing' þens a forlonge
The wenche routeþ eek p*ar* companye
Aleyn þe Clerk þat' herd' þis melodye 4168

He pouked on Iohn̄ and seide slepestowe
Herde þou euere sclike a sang' or nowe
Lo sclike a conplinge is ytwix hem alle
A wilde fire on her bodies falle 4172
Who herkened euere sclike a ferly þinge
ȝe þei shal haue þe floure of euel endinge
This lange nyȝt' þer tydes men no reste
But' ȝit' na fors al shal be for þe beste 4176
ffor Iohn̄ seide he as euere mote I þrive
If þat' I may ȝon wenche þan wil I swyve
Some esement' haþ lawe shapen vs
ffor Iohn̄ *per* is a lawe þat' seiþ þus 4180
That' if a man in oon point' be agreued
That' in anoþer he shal be releued
Our corn is stollen soþly it' is no nay
And we han had an euel fit to day 4184
And syn I shal haue no amendement'
Ageyn my losse I wil haue esement'
By goddes saule it' sal na noþer be
þis Iohn̄ answerde Aleyn avise þe 4188
The Mellere is a p*er*ilous man he seide
And if þat' he out' of his sclepe abreide
He myght*e* don vs boþ a vylenye
Aleyn answerd' I counte hy*m* not' a flye 4192
And vp he rist' and by þe wenche he crepte
This wenche lay vpriȝt' and fast*e* sclepte
Til he so nygh̄ was er she myȝt*e* spie
þat' it' had bene to late forto crie 4196
And shortely for to seie þei were at' oñ
Nowe pleye Alayn for I wil speke of Iohn̄
This Iohn̄ lith̄ stille a forlonge way or two
And to hym self he makeþ wamenting' *and* woo 4200
Allas quod he þis is a wikke Iape [leaf 59]
Now may I seie þat' I is but' an ape
ȝit' haþ my felawe somwhat' for his harme
He haþ þe mellers douȝter in his arme 4204

He Auntreþ hym and haþ his nedes spedde
And I ly as a draf sak in my bedde
And whan þis Iape is tolde anoþer day
I shal be holde a daff a cokenay 4208
I wil arise and aunter be my fatħ
Vnhardy is vnsely þus men satħ
And vp he roos and softely he wentᵗ
Vnto þe Cradel and in his arme hitᵗ hentᵗ 4212
And bare itᵗ softᵗ vntil his beddes fete
Sone aftere þe wif her rowtingᵗ lete
And gan to wake and wentᵗ her outᵗ to pisse
And come agein and gan her cradel mysse 4216
And groped here and þere butᵗ she foondᵗ noon/
Allas quod she I had almostᵗ mysgoñ
I had almostᵗ go to þe clerkes bedde
Ey benedicite þan had I foule yspedde 4220
And forþ she goþ til she þe cradel fonde
She gropeþ alway forþer wiþ her honde
And fond þe bed and þouȝtᵗ nouȝtᵗ butᵗ of good
By cause þatᵗ þe cradel by itᵗ stode 4224
And nyste wher she was for itᵗ was derk
But faire and wel she crepte in to þe clerkᵗ
And lith ful stille and wolde haue kauȝtᵗ a slepe
Wiþ-In a while þis Iohñ þe clerkᵗ vp lepe 4228
And on þis good[e] wif hee leiþ ful sore
So mery a fitte ne had she notᵗ ful ȝore
And prikeþ harde and depe as he ware[1] madde [1 ? MS]
þis Ioly lifᵗ han þise two clerkes ladde 4232
To þatᵗ þe iij. coke bygan to singe
Aleyn wexe wery. in þe daw[e]nynge
ffor he had swonken al þe longe nyȝtᵗ
And seide fare wel malynᵗ sweete wiȝtᵗ 4236
The day is come I may no lenger byde [leaf 59, back]
Butᵗ euermo where so I go or ride
I am þine owne clerk so haue I sele
Now dere lemman quod she go fare wele 4240

But er þou goo. on þinge I wil þe telle
Whhan þat þow wendest homward by þe melle
Right at þe entre of þe door be-hinde
Thow shalt a Cake of half a busshel fynde 4244
That was ymaked of þine owne mele
Whicħ þat I helpe my Sire forto stele
And good lemman god þe saue and kepe
And wiþ þat word almost she gan to wepe 4248
Aleyn vprist and þouȝt er þat it dawe
I wol go crepen in by my felawe
And fonde þe cradel wiþ his honde anoñ
By god þought he alwrong / I haue mysgoñ 4252
Myn hede is toty of my swynk to nyght
þat makeþ me þat I go not aright
I wote wele by þe cradel I haue mysgo
Here litħ þe meller and his wif also 4256
And forþ he goþ on twenty delway
Vnto þe bedde þer as þe meller lay
He wende haue cropen by his felawe Ioħn
And by þe Meller in he crept anoñ 4260
And kaught him by þe nek and soft he spake
And seide þou Ioħn þou swyneshede awake
Of Cristes saule and here a noble game
ffor by þat lord þat called is seint Iame 4264
As I haue þries in þis short*e* nyȝt
Swyved þe Mellers douȝter bolt vpriȝt
Whilst þow hast as a Coward beñ agast
Ye fals harlot quod þe Meller*e* hast 4268
A fals traito*ur*. fals clerk quod he
þow shalt be dede by goddes dignyte
Who durst*e* be so bolde to disp*ar*age
My douȝter þat is come of swicħ lynage 4272
And by þe þrote bolle he kauȝt aleyñ [leaf 60]
And he him hent dispitously ageyñ
And on þe nose he smote hy*m* w*ith* his fist
Doune ranne þe blody streme vpon his brist 4276

And in þe floor wiþ nose and mouþ to-broke
þei walowen as don two pigges in a poke
And vp þei goon and doune anoñ
Till þat' þe Mellere spurned at a stoñ 4280
And downe he felle bakward' vpon his wiff
þat' wist' no þinge of þis nyce striff
ffor she was falle a slepe a litel wiȝt'
Wiþ Iohñ þe clerk þat' waked had al nyȝt' 4284
And wiþ þe falle out' of her slepe she braide
Help holy crosse of bromholm she saide
In manus tuas lorde to þe I calle
Awake Symond' þe feend is on me falle 4288
Myn hert' is broken help I ne am but' dede
þere litñ vpon my wombe *and* on myn hede
Helpe Symkyn for þise fals clerkes fiȝt'
This Iohñ stert' vp as fast' as eu*ere* he myȝt' 4292
And grasped by þe walles to and fro
To fynden a staf and she stert' vp also
And knewe þe Eisters bet' þan did Iohñ
And by þe walle she fonde a staf anōn 4296
And segh̄ a litel shymering' of a liȝt'
ffor at' an hole in shone þe mone briȝt'
And by þat' liȝt' she segh̄ hem boþ[e] two
But' sikerly she nyst*e* who was who 4300
But' as she seegh a white þinge in her eye
And whan she gan þis white þing' aspie
She wende þe Clerk had wered a volipere
And wiþ þe staf' she drough̄ ay ner and ner*e* 4304
And wende han hitte þis Aleyn atte fulle
And smote þe Mylere on þe pyled skulle
þat' doun he goth *and* cried harowe I dye
Thise Clerkes bette hym wel and lete hy*m* lye 4308
And Greieþ hem and toke her hors anoñ [leaf 60, back]
And eke her/ mele and on her way þei gōn
And at' the Melle ȝit' þei toke her Cake
Of half a busshel floure ful wel ybake 4312

Thus is þe proude Mellere wel ybete
And hath ylostᵗ þe grynding of þe whete
And paide for þe soper eu*er*y deħ
Of aleyn and of Iohn̄ þatᵗ bette hy*m* weħ 4316
His wiff is swyued and his douȝtere als
Lo such itᵗ is a Millerʳ to be fals
And þerfor þis prouerbe is seide ful soth̄
Hym ther notᵗ wene wele þatᵗ euel doth̄ 4320
A Gilour shal hym self begiled be
And god þatᵗ sitteþ hegh̄ in mageste
Saue al þe company grete *and* smale
Thus haue I quytte þe Mellerʳ in my tale 4324
¶ Thus Endeth þe Reues Tale

[*No break in the MS.*]

And here bygynneþ þe Cokes tale

The Coke of londoñ while þe Reue spak ¶ The Prologe
ffor Ioye him þouȝt' he clawed hy*m* on þe bak'
Ha. ha. quod he for cristes passioñ
This Millere haþ a sharpe conclusioñ 4328
Vpon his argument' of harbigage
Wel seide Salomon in his langage
Ne bringe not' euery man into þine hous
ffor herbowringe by nyght' is perilous 4332
Wel ouȝt' a man avised forto be
Whoom þat' he brouȝt' into his pryvete
I prey to god so ȝeue me sorowe and care
If euer siþen I hight' hogge of ware 4336
Herd I Meller better ysette a werke
He had a Iape of malice in þe derke
And þerfor if ȝe vouche sauf to here 4340
But' god forbede þat' we stynt' heere 4339
A tale of me þat' am a poor man
I wil ȝou telle as wel as euer I can
A litel Iape þat' felle in o*ur* Cite [leaf 61]
Our hooste answerd' *and* seide I g*ra*unte it' þe 4344
Now telle on Rogg*er* and loke þat' it' be good
ffor mony a paast hast' þou laten blood
And mony a Iak of Douer hast' þou sold'
þat' haþ be twies hoote and twies cold' 4348
Of mony a pilgryme hast' þ*o*u c*ri*stes curs
ffor of þi Persely ȝit' fare þei þe wors
þat' þei han eten wiþ þi stobel goos
ffor in þi shoppe is mony a flee loos 4352
Now telle on gentil Rogger by þi name
But' ȝit' I prei þe be not' wroþ for game
A man may say ful soþ in game *and* play
Þow seist ful soþ quod Rogg*er* be my fay 4356

But' soþ play quade play as þe flemmyng' saiþ
And þ*er*fore henry balyf by þi feiþ
Be þow not' wroþ er we departen here
þoughe þat' my tale be of an ostylere 4360
But' naþelees I wil not' tellen it' ȝit'
But' er we part' I-wis þou shalt' be quyt'
And þerwiþ al [he] lough and made chere
And saide his tale as ȝe shal aft*er* here 4364
þus endeþ þe prologe of þe cokes tale

[*No break in the MS.*]

And here bygynneþ þe Cokes tale ¶ The Cokes Tale.

A Prentis whilom dwelled in our Cite
And of a craft of vitalers was he
Gailard he was as gold-fynch in þe shawe
Broun as þe bery. a *pr*opre short felawe 4368
Wiþ lockes blake ykempt ful fetisly
Daunce he couþe so wel and Iolily
þat he was cleped Perkyn reveilour
He was as ful of loue and paramo*ur* 4372
As is þe hyve ful of hony swete
Wel was þe wenche wiþ him myȝt mete
And euery Bridale wold he sing and hoppe
He loued bette þe Tauern þan þe shoppe 4376
ffor whan þer eny ridynge was in chepe [leaf 61, back]
Out of þe Shoppe þidere wold he lepe
Til þat he had al þe siȝt yseyn
And daunsed wel wold he not come ageyn 4380
And gader hym a mayne of his sort
To hoppe and synge and make such disport
And þer þei setten steuen forto mete
To pleyn at þe dis in such a strete 4384
ffor in þe toune nas þer no prentys
þat fairrer couþe cast a peire of dys
þan p*er*kyn couþe *and* þerto he was free
Of his dispence in place of pryvete 4388
That fonde his maist*er* wel in his chaffar*e*
ffor oft tymes he fonde his boxe ful bar*e*
ffor sikerly a prentise Reveilour
þat haunteþ dis ryot and p*ar*amour 4392
His maister shuld*e* in his shop abye
Al haue he not part of þe mynstralcie
ffor þeft and riot þei ben conuertible
Al conne he pley on gitern or rubible 4396

Reuel and trouþe as in a lough̄ degre
þei ben ful wroþ alday as men may see
þis Ioly Prentis wiþ his maist*er* bode
Til he were nygh̄ out' of his prentisehode 4400
Al were he snybbed erly or late
And somtyme ladde wiþ revel to Newgate
But' atte last' his maist*er* hym byþouȝte
Vpon a day whan he his paper souȝte 4404
Of a prouerd̄ þat' seiþ þis same word̄
Wel bette is roten appel out' of horde
þan þat' it rote al þe remen*au*nte
So fareþ it' by a ryotous s*er*u*au*nte 4408
It is moche lasse harme to lat' hy*m* passe
þan he sheed alle þe seru*au*ntes in þe place
Therfor his maister ȝaue hy*m* a quyta*u*nce
And bad hym goo wiþ sorowe and mesch*a*unce 4412
And þus þis prentise had his leue. [leaf 62]
Now lat' him riot' al þe nyȝt' or leue
And for þer is no þeef wiþ-out' a louke
þat' helpeþ hym to waasten or to souke 4416
Of þat' he bribe can or borowe may
Anon he sent' his bedde *and* his aray
Vnto a conper of his owne sort'
þat' loued dys [and] reuel and disport' 4420
And had a wif þat' helde for counten*au*nce
A Shop and swyued for her susten*au*nce

[*No break in the MS.*]

APPENDIX TO GROUP A.

[THE SPURIOUS TALE OF GAMELYN.]

[*Spurious Link.*]

But here-of I wil pas as nowe
And of yonge Gamely*n* I wil telle ȝou. 2

[*Tale.*]

¶ þe tale of yonge Gamelyne

Liþes *and* listneþ and harkneþ a-riȝt
And ȝe shul here of a doughty knyȝt
Sir Iohn of boundes was his name
He coude of Norture and of mochel game 4
Thre sones þe knyght had *and* wiþ his body he wan
The eldest was a moche schrewe and sone bygan
His breþer loued wel her fader *and* of him were agast
þe eldest deserued his faders curs *and* had it atte last 8
þe good knyght his fadere lyued so yore
þat deþ was co*m*men to hym . and handled hy*m* ful sore
þe Good knyght cared sore . sik þ*er* he lay
How his children shuld lyuen after his day 12
He had ben wide where . but non husbonde he was
Al þe londe þat he had it was purchas/
ffayn he wold it were dressed among hem alle
That eche of hem had his parte as it myȝt falle 16
þoo sente he in to contrey after wise knyȝtes
To helpen delen his londes: *and* dressen hem to riȝtes
He sent hem word by letters: þei shul hie blyve
Yf þei wolk speke wiþ hy*m*: whilst he was a lyve 20

Whan þe kny3tes harden sik þat' he lay
Had þei no rest' neiþer' : ny3t' ne day
Til þei come to hy*m* ⁝ þer he lay stille
On his deþes bedde/ to abide goddys wille 24
Than seide þe good knyght' seke þer he lay [leaf 62, back]
Lordes I 3ou warne for soþ wiþ-out' nay
I may no lenger lyuen here in þis stounde
ffor þorgh goddis wille ⁝ deþ droueþ me to grounde 28
Þer nas noon of hem alle ⁝ þat' herd hy*m* ari3t'
þat' þei ne had routh ⁝ of þat' ilk*e* kny3t'
And seide sir' for goddes loue ⁝ dismay 3ou nou3t'
God may doñ boote of bale ⁝ þ*a*t is now ywrou3t' 32
þan speke þe good kny3t' ⁝ sik' þ*er* he lay
Boote of bale god may sende ⁝ I wote it' is no nay
But' I bisecche 3o^u^ kny3tes for þe loue of me
Goþ and dresseþ my londes ⁝ among' my sones þre 36
And for þe loue of god deleþ not' amys
And forgeteþ not' Gamelyne ⁝ my 3ong' son*ne* þ*a*t is/
Takeþ hede to þat' oon as wel as to þ*a*t oþ*er*e
Seelde 3e seen eny hier . helpen his broþ*er*e 40
þoo lete þei þe knyght' lyen ⁝ þat' was not' in hele
And wenten into counselh his londes forto dele
Forto delen he*m* alle to oñ ⁝ þat' was her þou3t'
And for Gamelyñ was 3ongest' he shuld haue nou3t' 44
Ah þe londe þat' þer was ⁝ þei dalten it' in two
And lete Gamelyn*e* þe 3onge ⁝ w*it*h*ou*t' londe goo
And eche of hem seide to other ful loude
His breþeren my3t' 3eue him londe whan he good cowde 48
And whan þei had deled þe londe at' her wille
þei co*m*men to þe knyght'. þer he lay stille
And tolde him anoon ⁝ how þei had wrou3t'
And þe knyght' þere he laye liked it' ri3t nou3t' 52
¶ Than seide þe kny3t' ⁝ be seint' Martyne
For al þat' 3e han done ⁝ 3it is the londe myne
ffor goddis loue neighbours . stondeþ all*e* stille
And I wil delen my londe ⁝ after myn owne wille 56

Iohn myne eldest sone ⁊ shal haue plowes fyve
þat was my faders heritage ⁊ whan he was alyve
And my myddelest sone .v. plowes of londe
þat I halpe forto gete *with* my riȝt honde 60
And al myn o*þe*re p*ur*chace of londes *and* ledes [leaf 63]
þat I biqueþe Gamelyn. and al my good stedes
And I biseche ȝou good men þat lawe co*n*ne of londe
For Gamelynes loue ⁊ þat my quest stonde 64
Thus dalt þe knyȝt. his londe by his day
Riȝt on his deþ bed sik þer he lay
And sone afterward he lay stoon stille
And deide whan tyme come ⁊ as it was cr*is*tes wille 68
Anoon as he was dede and vnder gras graue
Sone þe elder broþer ⁊ giled þe ȝonge knaue
He toke into his honde his londe *and* his lede
And Gamelyne him seluen to cloþe *and* to fede 72
He cloþed him and fedde him/ euell *and* eke wrothe
And lete his londes forfare ⁊ and his houses boþe
His Parkes and his wodes ⁊ and did no þing welle
And siþen he it abouȝt on his owne felle 76
So longe was Gamelyne in his broþers halle
ffor þe strengest of good will þei douted hy*m* alle
þer was noon þer-Inne neiþer ȝonge ne olde
þat wold wrethe Gamelyn. were he neu*er* so bolde 80
Gamelyne stood on a day ⁊ in his broþeres ȝerde
And bygaune wiþ his hond/ to handel his berde
He þouȝt on his landes þat lay vnsowe
And his fare okes þat doune were ydrawe 84
His Parkes were broken/ and his deer reued
Of alle his good stedes/ noon was hy*m* byleued
His hous were vnhilled/ *and* ful euell diȝt
Tho þouȝt Gamelyne/ it went not ariȝt 88
¶ Afterward come his broþer walking þare
And seide to Gamelyn. is our mete ȝare
Tho wrathed him Gamelyn/ *and* swore by goddys boke
Þow shalt go bake þi self/ I wil not be þi coke 92

What broþer Gamelyne howe answerst þou nowe
þou spekest neuere such a word as þou dost nowe
By feiþe seide Gamelyn: now me þenkeþ nede
Of al þe harmes þat I haue: I toke neu*ere* ȝit hede. 96
My parkes bene broken: *and* my dere reued [leaf 63, back]
Of myn armes ne my stedes: nouȝt is byleued
Alle þat my fader me byquaþe: al goþ to shame
And þerfor haue þou goddes curs: broþ*ere* be þi name 100
þan spake his broþer þat rape was and rees
Stond stille Gadlynge and holde þi pees
Thou shalt be fayn to haue: þi mete *and* þi wede
What spekest þow gadeling. of londe or of lede 104
Than seide Gamelyn: þe child so ȝing
Cristes curs mote he haue: þat me clepeth Gadelinge
I am no wors Gadeling: ne no wors wiȝt
But born of a lady and gete of a knyȝt 108
Ne dorst he not to Gamelyn neuere a foot goo
But cleped to hym his men: and seide to he*m* þoo/
Goþ and beteþ þis boye and reueþ hy*m* his witte
And lat him lerne anoþer tyme: to answer me bette 112
Than seide þe Child ȝonge Gamelyn
Cristes curs mote þou haue: broþer art þou myn
And if I shal algates be beten anon
Cristes curs mote þou haue: but þou be þat on 116
And anon his broþer in þat grete hete
Made his men to fette staues Gamelyn to bete
Whan euery of hem had a staf yno*m*men
Gamelyn was werre. whan he segh hem co*m*men 120
Whan Gamelyne segh hem co*m*men. he loked ou*er* alle
And was ware of a pestel: stode vnder þe walle
Gamelyn was liȝt and þider gan he lepe
And droof alle his broþeres men riȝt sone on an hepe 124
And loked as a wilde lyon. and leide on good wone
And whan his broþer segh þat: he byga*n*ne to gon
He fley vp into a loft: and shette þe door fast
þus Gamelyn wiþ his pestel. made hem al a-gast 128

Some for Gamelyns loue. *and* some for eye
Alle þei droughen hem to halues whan he gan to pleye
¶ What' nowe seide Gamelyn̄ ⁊ euel mote ȝe the
Wil ȝe bygynne contecte ⁊ and so sone flee 132
Gamelyn̄ souȝt' his broþ*er* ⁊ whider' he was flowe [leaf 64]
And seghe where he loked out' a wyndowe
Broþ*er*e seide Gamelyn̄. come a litel nere
And I wil teche þe a play at þe bokelere 136
His broþ*er*e him ansuerde. *and* seide by seint' Richere
þe while þat' pestel is in þine honde. I wil come no nere
Broþer I wil make þi pees ⁊ I swer by c*ri*stes oore
Cast' away þe pestel. and wreþe þe no more 140
I most' nede seide Gamelyn wreþ me at' onys
ffor þou wold make þi men. to breke my bonys
Ne had I hadde mayn̄ *and* myȝt' in myn armes
To han hem fro me. þei wold haue don̄ me harmes 144
Gamelyn seide his broþer be þou not' wroth̄
Forto seno þe han harme. me were riȝt' loth̄
I ne did it' not' broþer but' for a fondinge
ffor to loken wher þou art' stronge and art' so ȝenge 148
Come a doune þan to me and graunt' me my bone
Of oon þing' I wil þe axe and we shal sauȝt' sone
Doune þan come his broþer þat' fikel was *and* felle
And was swiþ sore a-feerd of þe pestelle 152
He seide broþer Gamelyn axe me þi bone
And loke þou me blame but' I it' gr*au*nte sone
þan seide Gamelyn broþ*er* I-wys
And we shul be at' oñ. þ*o*u most gr*au*nte me this 156
Att̄ þat' my fader me by-quaþ. whilst' he was alyue
þow most' do me it' haue. if we shul not' strive
þat' shalt' þou haue Gamelyn I swere bi c*ri*stes oore.
Al þat' þi fadere þe by-quaþe. þough þ*o*u wold' haue more
Thy londe þat' lith̄ ley. wel it' shal be sawe 161
And þine houses reised vp þat' bene leide ful lawe
Thus seide þe knyght. to gamelyn wiþ mouþe
And þouȝt on falsnes as he wel couþe 164

þe kny3t' þou3t' on tresoñ. and gamelyn anoñ
And wente *and* kissed his broþ*er and* whan þei were at oñ
Alas yonge Gamelyn no þing' he ne wist
Wiþ suchñ fals tresoñ . his broþer him kist' 168
Lyþenethñ and listeneþ and holdeþ 3*our* tonge [leaf 64, back]
And 3e shul here talking' of Gamelyn þe 3onge
¶ Ther was þere bisiden cride a wrastelinge
And þerfore þer was sette a ra*m*me *and* a ringe 172
And Gamelyn was in wille to wende þ*er*to/
fforto preuen his my3t' what' he coude doo
Broþere seide Gamelyn by seint' Richere
þow most' lene me to ny3t' a litel coursere 176
That' is fresshe fro þe spore on for to ride
I most' on an erand' a litel here beside
By god seide his broþer/ of stedes in my stalle
Goo and chese þe the best' spare noñ of he*m* alle 180
Of stedes and of coursers þat' stoden he*m* byside
And telle me good broþer whider þ*o*u wilt ride
Here beside broþer is cried a wrastelinge
And þerfore shal be sette a ram *and* a ringe 184
Moche worchip it were broþ*ere* to vs alle
Might' I þe ram *and* þe ring' bring' home to þis halle
A stede ther was sadeled smertly an skete
Gamelyn did a peire spores fast' on his fete 188
He sette his foote in þe stirop þe stede he bistrode
And towardes þe wrasteling' þe yong' childe rode
¶ Whan Gemelyn þe 3onge was riden out' atte gate
þe fals kny3t' his broþer loked it' after' þate 192
And bysou3t' Ih*es*u c*rist*' þat' is heuene kinge
He myght' breke his necke in þe wrestelinge
As sone as Gamelyn come þ*er* þe place was
He light' doune of his stede *and* stood on þe gras 196
And þer he herde a frankeleyn weiloway singe
And by-gonne bitterly his hondes for to wringe
Good man seide Gamelyn ! whi mast þou þis fare
Is þer no man þat' may. 3ou helpen out' of care 200

Allas seide þis frankeleyn þat' euere was I bore
ffor twey stalworþ sones ⁊ I wene þat' I haue lore
A champion is in þe place. *þat'* haþ wrouȝt' me sorowe
ffor he haþ sclayn my two sones. but' ȝif god he*m* borowe
I wil ȝeue x. li. by Ihesu c*ri*st *and* more [leaf 65]
Wiþ þe nones I fonde a man wold' handel h*ym* sore
Good man seide Gamely*n* wilt' þou wele doñ
Holde my hors þe whiles my man ⁊ drowe of my shoñ 208
And helpe my man to kepe/ my cloþes *and* my stede
And I wil to place goñ. to loke if I may spede
By god seide þe ffrankeleyn it' shal be doñ
I wil my self be þi man to drowe of þi shoñ 212
And wende þou into place Ihesu c*ri*st þe spede
And drede not' of þi cloþes. ne of þi good stede
Bare-foot' and vngirt'. Gamelyn Inne came
Alle þat' were in þe place. hede of him name 216
Howe he durst' auenture him to doñ his myȝt'
þat' was so doghty a champiōn in wrasteling' *and in* fiȝt
Vp stert' þe Champion rapely anōn
And toward' yong' Gamelyn byganne to gōn 220
And seide who is þi fadere *and* who is þi sire
ffor sothe þou art' a grete fool þat' thou come hire
Gamelyn answerd' þe Championñ þo
Thowe knewe wel my fadere while he myȝt goo 224
þe whiles he was alyue by seynt' Martyn
Sir' Iohñ of Boundes was his name *and* I am Gamelyñ
¶ ffelawe seide þe Champiōn so mote I þrive
I knewe wel þi fadere þe whiles he was alyue 228
And þi silf Gamelyn I wil þat' þou it here
While þou were a ȝong' boy. a mochñ shrewe þou were
Than seide Gamelyn and swore by c*ri*stes ore
Now I am older wexe þou shalt' finde me a more 232
By god seide þe Champion welcome mote þou be
Come þow onys in my honde. þou shalt' neuere the
It was wel wiþ-in þe nyȝt' *and* þe mone shone
Whan Gamelyn and þe Championñ to-gider' gon gone 236

The Champion cast' turnes to Gamelyñ þat was prest'
And Gamelyn stode and bad hym done his best'
Than seide Gamelyn to þe Champioun
Þowe art' fast' aboute to bringe me adoun 240
Now I haue proued mony turnes of· þine [leaf 65, back]
Thow most' he seide oon or ij. of myne
Gamelyn to þe Championñ ȝede smertely anōn
Of alle þe turnes þat' he couþe he shewed hym but oñ
And cast' him on þe lift' side. þat þre ribbes to-brake 245
And þerto his owne arme þat' ȝaf a grete crake
Than seide Gamelyn smertly anōn
Shal it' bihold' for a cast' or ellis for nōn 248
By god seide þe Champion whedere it' bee
He þat' commeþ ones in þi honde shal he neuere the
¶ Than seide þe frankeley þat had þe sones þere
Blessed be þou Gamelyn þat' euere þou bore were 252
The ffrankleyn seide to þe Championñ on hym stode hym
This is ȝonge Gamelyñ þat' tauȝt/ þe þis pleye [noñ eye
Aȝein answerd' þe Champion). þat' likeþ no þing' wel
He is alþer maister and his pley is riȝt' felł 256
Siþen y wrasteled first' it' is goon ȝore
But' I was neuer' in my lif handeled so sore
Gamelyn stode in þe place anon wiþ-out' serk'
And seide ȝif þer be moo lat' hem come to werk' 260
The Champion þat' pyned hym to worch sore
It' semeþ by his countenaunce þat' he wil no more
Gamelyin in þe place stood stille as stone
ffor to abide wrastelinge but' þer come nonē 264
Þer was noon wiþ gamelyn þat wold wrastel more
ffor he handeled the Championñ so wonderly sore
Two gentile men þat ȝemed þe place
Come to Gamelyin god ȝeue hym good grace 268
And seide to hym do on · þi hosen and þi shoone
ffor soþ at' þis tyme þis fare is done
And þan seide Gamelyn so mot' I wel fare
I haue not' ȝete haluendele sold my ware 272

þoo seide þe Championñ: so broke I my swere
He is a fool þat' þerof bieþ þou selleþ it' so dere
Tho saide þe ffrankeleyñ þat' was in mochñ care
ffelawe he saide whi lackest' þou þis ware 276
By sante Iame of Gales þat' mony man haþ souȝt [leaf 66]
ȝit' is it' to good chepe þat' þow hast' bouȝt'
Thoo þat' wardeynes were of þat' wrasteling'
Come and brouȝt' Gamelyn þe Ram*me* *and* þe rynge 280
[. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
And Gamelyn biþouȝt' him it was a faire þinge
And went' wiþ moche Ioye home in þe mornynge 284
¶ His broþer see wher he came: wiþ þe grete route
And bad shitt' þe gate and hold' hy*m* wiþ oute
The Porter of his lord' was soor a gaast'
And stert' anoon to þe gate and lokked it' fast' 288
¶ Now lithenes *and* listneþ boþ ȝonge *and* olde
And ȝe shul here gamen of Gamelyn þe bold*e*
Gamelyn come to þe gate for to haue come Inne
And it' was shett' fast' wiþ a strong' pynne 292
þan seide Gamelyn Porter vndo þe ȝate
ffor good me*n*nys sones stonden þ*er*-ate
þan answerd' þe porter and swore by goddys berd*e*
þow ne shalt' Gamelyñ come into þis ȝerde 296
Thow lixt' seide Gamelyñ/ so broke I my chyne
He smote þe wikett' wiþ his foote and breke awaie þ^e^ py*n*ne
The Porter seie þoo/ it myȝt no bett*er* be
He sette foote on erthñ and bygan to flee 300
By my feye seide Gamelyn þat' travaile is ylore
ffor I am of fote as light' as þ*o*u. if þ*o*u haddest' it swore
Gamelyn ouertoke þe porter'. and his tene wrake
And girt' him in þe nek' þat' þe boon to-brake 304
And toke hym by þat' oon arme/ and threwe hy*m* in a welle
vij^c^. fadme it' was depe/ as I haue herd' telle
¶ Whan Gamelyn þe yonge þus had plaied his playe
Alle þat' in þe yerde were. drowen hem awaye 308

þei dredden him ful sore for werk þat' he wrouȝt'
And for þe faire company þat' he þider brouȝt'
Gamelyn ȝede to þe gate/ and lete it' vp wide
He lete Inne all. þat' goñ wold' or ride 312
And seide ȝe be welcome wiþ out' eny greue
ffor we wil be maisters here and axe no man leue
ȝusterday I left'/ seide ȝonge Gamelyñ [leaf 66, back]
In my broþers seler'/ v. tonne of wyñ 316
I wil not' þis company p*ar*tyn a-twynne
And ȝe wil done after me/ while sope is þ*er*-Inne
And if my broþer gruche or make foule chere
Eiþer for spence of mete and drink'/ þ*at* we spende here
I am oure Cato*ur* and bere our alþer purs 321
He shal haue for his grucching' seint' Maries curs
My broþer is a Nigon! I swere be c*ri*stes oore
And we wil spende largely/ þ*at*' he haþ spared yore 324
And who þat' make grucchinge þat' we here dwelle
He shal to þe porter in to þe drowe-welle
.Vij. dayes and vij. nyȝtes Gamelyn helde his feest'
Wiþ moche solace/ was þer noon cheest' 328
In a litel torret' his broþer lay steke
And see hem waast' his good and dorst' no word' speke
Erly on a mornynge on þe viij. day
The Gestes come to Gamelyn and wold*e* goñ her way 332
Lordes seide Gamelyn wil ȝe so hie
Al þe wyne is not' ȝit' dronke so brouke I myñ ye
Gamelyn in his hert'/ was ful woo
Whan his gestes toke her leue. fro hym forto go 336
He wolde þei had dwelled lenger. *and* þei seide nay
But' bytaught' Gamelyn. god and good day
Thus made Gamelyn his feest'. *and* brouȝt' wel to ende
And aftere his gestes. toke leue to wende 340
¶ Lythen and listen and holde ȝour' tunge
And ȝe shal here Game of Gamelyn þe ȝonge
Harkeneth lordingges and listeneþ ariȝt
Whan alle gestis were goon how gamelyn was diȝt' 344

Alle þe while þat' Gamelyn heeld his Mangerye
His broþere þouȝt' on hym be wroke/ *with* his trecherye
Whan Gamylyns gestes were riden and goñ
Gamelyn stood anon allone/ frend had he noñ 348
Tho aftere felle sone/ *with*-in a litel stounde
Gamelyn was taken/ and ful hard ybounde
fforþ Come þe fals knynght'! out' of þe Solere [leaf 67]
To Gamelyn his broþer/ he ȝede ful nere 352
And saide to Gamelyn/ who made þe so bold
For to stroien þe stoor of myn household
Broþer seide Gamelyn wreþ þe riȝt' nought'
ffor it' is many day gon siþ it' was bouȝt' 356
ffor broþer þou hast' had by seint' Richere
Of xv. plowes of londe. þis xvj. ȝere
And of alle þe beestes þou hast' forþ bredde
That' my fader me byquathñ on his deþes bedde 360
Of al þis xvj. ȝere I ȝeue þe þe prowe
ffor þe mete and þe drink þat' we han spended nowe
Than seide þe fals knyȝt'. euel mote he þee
Herken broþere Gamelyn what' I wil ȝeue þe 364
ffor of my body broþer! here geten haue I none
I wil make þe myn heire I s ere by seint' Iohñ
Parfay seide Gamelyn! *and* if it' so be
And þou thenk' as þou seist'! god ȝeeld it' þe 368
No þinge wist' Gamelyn of his broþer gile
Therfore he hym bygiled in a litel while
Gamelyn seide. oon þing' I þe telle
þoo þou þrewe my porter in þe drowe-welle 372
I swore in þat' wreþe and in þat' grete moote
þat' þou shuldest' be bounde boþe honde *and* fote
[. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] 376
This most' be fulfilled! my men to dote
ffor to holden myn avowe as I þe bihote
¶ Broþer seide Gamelyn as mote I þee
þou shalt' not' be forswore for þe loue of me 380

Tho maden þei Gamelyn to sitte and not' stonde
To þei had hym bounde boþ fote and honde
þe fals knyght' his broþer'. of Gamelyn was a-gast'
And sent' efter fetters to fetter' hy*m* fast' 384
His broþer made lesingges on him þ*er* he stode
And tolde hem þat' co*m*men Inne þ*a*t Gamelyn was wode
Gamelyn stode to a post'. bounden in þe hall
Þoo þat' co*m*men Inne. loked on hym all 388
Euer stode Gamelyn euen vp-ri3t' [leaf 67, back]
But' mete and drink had ne nou*n*. neiþ*er* day ne ny3t'
Than seide Gamelyn/ brother be myn hals
Nowe haue I aspied þou art' a party fals 392
Had I wist' þe Tresoñ þat' hast' yfounde
I wold haue 3eue strokes or I had be bounde
Gamelyn stode bounde stille as eny stone
Tho daies and two ny3tes mete had he none 396
Than seide Gamelyn: þat' stood ybound' stronge
Adam Spencer' me þenkeþ I fast' to longe
Adam Spencere now I bisechе þe
ffor þe moche loue my fadere loued þe 400
If þou may come to þe keys/ lese me out' of bonde
And I wil part' wiþ þe of my free londe
Than seide Adam þat' was þe spencere
I haue serued þi broþer þis xvj 3ere 404
3if I lete þe gon*e* out' of his boure
He wold saye afterwardes I were a trato*ur*
Adam seide Gamelyn so brouke I myn hals
Thow shalt' finde þi broþer at' þe last' fals 408
Therfore broþer Adam lose me out' of boñdes
And I will parte wiþ þe of my free londes
Vp such forward' seide Adam ywis
I wil do þerto al þat' in me is 412
Adam seide Gamelyn as mote I þe
I wil holde þe Con*au*nte and þou wil me [fre]
Anoon as Adams lord' to bed was goñ
Adam toke þe kayes and lete Gamelyn out' anoñ 416

He vnlocked Gamelyn boþ hondes *and* fete
In hope of au*au*ncement' þat' he hy*m* byhete
Than seide Gamelyn þonked be goddis sonde
Nowe I am lose boþ fote and honde 420
Had I nowe eten and dronken ariȝt'
þer is noon in þis hous shuld' bynde me þis nyȝt'
Adam toke Gamelyn as stille as eny stone
And ladde him into þe spence raply anon*e* 424
And sette him to sopere riȝt' in a p*ri*vey styde [leaf 68]
He bad hym do gladly and so he dide
Anoon as Gamelyn had eten wel *and* fyne
And þerto y-dronken wel of þe rede wyne 428
Adam seide Gamelyn what' is nowe þi rede
Or I go to my broþer and Gerd of his his hede
Gamelyn seide Adam it' shal not' be so
I can teche þe a rede þat' is worþ þe twoo/ 432
I wote wel forsoþ þat' þis is no nay/
We shul haue a Mangerye riȝt' on sonday
Abbotes and Priours mony here shul be
And oþer men of holy chirch̄ as I telle þe 436
þ*o*u shal stonde vp by þe post' as þ*o*u were bo*u*nde fast'
And I shal leue hem vnloke þat' away þ*o*u may he*m* cast'
Whan þat' þei han eten and wasshen her handes
þow shalt' biseche hem alle to bringe þe out' of bondes 440
And if þei willen borowe þe þat' were good game
þan were þou out' of p*ri*son and [I] out' of blame
And if ecche of hem saye to vs nay
I shal do anoþer I swere by þis day 444
þow shalt' haue a good staf *and* I wil haue anoþ*er*e
And cristes curs haf þat' on þat' failleþ þ*a*t oþ*er*e
ȝe for god seide Gamelyn I say it' for me
If I faille on my side evel mot' I þee 448
If we shul algate assoille hem of her synne
Warne me brother/ Adam whan we shul bygynne
Gamelyn seid Adam by seint' charite
I wil warne þe biforn whan it' shal be 452

Whan I winke on þe. loke forto gone
And caste away þi fetters and come to me anoñ
Adam seide Gamelyn blessed be þi bonys
Þat' is a good counseile ȝeuen for þe nonys 456
ȝif þei warne me þe to bring' out' of bondes
I wil sette good strokes riȝt' on here lendes
Whan þe Sonday was co*m*men and folk to þe feest
ffaire þei were welcomed. boþ leest' *and* mest' 460
And euer as þei at' þe haldore come Inne [leaf 68, back]
They casten her yen/ on ȝonge Gamelyñ
The fals knyȝt' his broþer ful of trecherye
Al þe gettes þat' þer were at' þe mangerye 464
Of Gamelyn his broþer he tolde hem wiþ mouþe
Al þe harme *and* þe shame þat' he telle couþe
Whan þei were yserued of messes ij. or thre
Þan seide Gamelyn howe serue ȝe me 468
It' is not' wel serued by god þat' alł made
Þat' I sitte fastinge and oþer men make glade
The fals knyȝt' his broþer þer as he stode
Told to alł þe gestes þat' Gamelyn was wode 472
And Gamelyn stode stille and answerd' nouȝt'
But' Adames wordes he helde in his þouȝt'
Thoo Gamelyn gan speke doolfully wiþ-alł
To þe grete lordes þat' seten in þe hałł 476
¶ Lordes he seide for cristes passioñ
Helpe to bringe Gamelyn out' of p*ri*soñ
Þan seide an Abbot' sorowe on his cheke
He shal haue c*ri*stes curs and seint' Maries eke 480
That' þe out' of prison beggeþ or borowe
And euer worþ him wel þat' doþ þe moche sorowe
After þat' Abbot' þan speke anoþ*er*e
I wold' þine hede were of þough þou were my broþ*er*e 484
Alł þat' þe borowe foule mot' hem falle
Thus þei seiden alle þat' were in þe halle
¶ Than seide a Priour/ euel mote he preue
It' is grete sorowe and care boy þ*a*t þou art alyue 488

Ow seide Gamelyn so brouke I my bone
Now haue I spied þat frendes haue I noñ
Cursed mote he worþ. boþ flessh and blood
þat euer doþ Priour or Abbot eny good 492
Adam þe Spencere toke vp þe clothe
And loked on Gamelyn and segh þat he was wroþe
Adam on the Pantry litel he þouȝt
And two good staues to þe halle door he brouȝt 496
Adam loked on Gamelyn and he was warre anoñ [leaf 69]
And cast away þe fetters *and* bygan to goñ
Whan he come to Adam he toke *þat* on staf
And bygan to worch and good strokes ȝaf 500
Gamelyn come into þe halle and þe Spencer boþe
And loked hem aboute as þei hadden be wroþe
Gamelyn spreyneþ holy watere wiþ an oken spire
That some þat stode vpriȝt felle in þe fire 504
þer was no lewe man þat in þe halle stode
þat wolde do Gamelyn eny þing but good
But stoden bisides and lete hem boþ wirch
ffor þei had no rewþe of men of holy chirch 508
Abbot or Priour monk or chano*un*
That Gamelyn ouertoke. anoñ þei ȝeden do*un*
Ther was noon of alle *þat* w*ith* his staf mette
þat he ne made hem ouer-þrowe to quyte he*m* his dette
Gamelyn seide Adam for seint charite 513
Pay good lyuere for þe loue of me
And I wil kepe þe door so euere here I masse
Er þei bene assoilled þer shal non passe 516
Doute þe not seide Gamelyn whil we ben i*n* fere
Kepe þowe wel þe door and I wil wirche here
Bystere þe good adam and lete non fle
And we shul telle largely how mony *þat þer* be 520
Gamelyn seide Adam do hem but goode
þei bene men of holy church drowe of hem no blode
Saue wel þe crownes. and do hem no harmes
But breke boþ her logges/ and siþen her armes 524

Thus Gamelyn and Adam wrouȝt' ryȝt' fast'
And pleide wiþ þe monkes and made he*m* agast'
Þidere þei come ridinge Ioly wiþ swaynes
And home aȝein þei were ladde i*n* cartes *and* waynes 528
Tho þei hadden al ydo. þan seide a grey frere
Allas Sir' abbot' what' did we nowe here
Whan þat' we co*m*men hidere it' was a cold' rede
Vs had be bet' haue be at' home . w*ith* wat*er and* brede 532
While Gamelyn̄ made orders of monke *and* frere [leaf 69, back]
Euere stood his broþer and made foule chere
Gamelyn vp wiþ his staf þat' he wel knewe
And girt' hym in þe nek þat' he ouer thrwe 536
A litel aboue þe Girdel þe Rigge-boon he brast
And sette him in þe fetters þer he sat' arst'
Sitte þer broþer seide Gamelyn̄
fforto colen þi body/ as I did myn̄ 540
As swith̄ as þei had wroken hem on her foon̄
þei asked water and wasshen anon̄
What' some for her loue and some for her Awe
Alł þe seru*au*ntes serued hem on þe best' lawe 544
þe Sherreue was þennes but .v. myle
And alł was tolde him in a lytel while
Howe Gamelyn and Adam had ydo a sorye rees
Bounden and wounded men aȝeinst þe kingges pees/ 548
Tho bygan sone strif' for to wake
And þe shereff about' Gamelyn forto take
¶ Now liþen and listen so god ȝeue ȝou good fyne
And ye shul here good game of yonge Gamelyne 552
xxiijj^tt ȝonge men þat' helde hem ful bold'
Come to þe shiref and seide þat' þei wold'
Gamelyn and Adam fette by her fay
The Sheref ȝaue hem leue soþ for to say 556
Thei hiden fast' wold þei not' lynne
To þei come to þe gate þere Gamelyn was Inne
Thei knocked on þe gate þe port*er* was nyȝe
And loked out' att' an hool as man þat' was scleȝe 560

þe Porter had bihold hem a litel while
He loued wel Gamelyn and was dradde of gyle
And lete þe wikett' stonde ful stille
And asked hem wiþ out' what' was her wille 564
ffor aꝗ þe grete company/ speke but oōn
Vndo þe gate porter and lat' vs in goñ
Þan seide þe Porter so brouke I my chyn
ȝe shul saie ȝoure erand er ȝe come Inne 568
Sey to Gamelyn and Adam/ if þeire wil be [leaf 70]
We wil speke wiþ hem two wordes or þre
ffelawe seide þe Porter stonde þer stille
And I wil wende to Gamelyn to wete his wille 572
Inne went' þe porter to Gamelyn anōñ
And saide sir' I warne ȝou here ben co*m*men ȝour' fooñ
The Shireues men bene at' þe gate
fforto take ȝou boþ ȝe shul not' scape 576
Porter seide Gamelyn so mote I þe
I wil alowe þi wordes whan I my tyme se
Go ageyn to þe gate and dwelle wiþ he*m* a while
And þou shalt' se riȝt' sone port*er* a gile 580
Adam seide gamelyn hast' þe to goñ
We han foo-men mony and frendes neu*ere* oñ
It' bene þe shireues men þat' hider bene co*m*men
þei ben swore to-gidere þat' we shal be nome*n* 584
Gamelyn seide Adam hye þe riȝt' blyve
And if I faile þe þis day euel mot' I þrive
And we shul so welcome þe shyreues men
þat' some of hem shal make her beddes in þe fenne 588
At' a postern gate Gamelyn out' went'
And a good Cartstaf in his hondes hent'
Adam hent' sone anoþer grete staff
ffor to helpen Gamelyne and good strokes ȝaf 592
Adam felled tweyn and Gamelyn þre
þe oþer sette fete on erþe and bygan to flee
What' seide Adam so euere here I masse
I haue riȝt' good wyne drynk er ȝe passe 596

Nay by god seide þei þi drink is not' goode
It wolde make a mannys brayn to lyen on his hode
Gamelyn stode stille and loked hy*m* aboute
And seide þe Shyref co*m*meþ wiþ a grete route 600
Adam seide Gamelyn what' bene nowe þi redes
Here co*m*meþ þe sheref and wil haue o*ur* hedes
Adam seide to Gamelyn my rede is now þis
Abide we no lenger lest we fare amys 604
I rede we to wode goñ/ er we be founde [leaf 70, back]
Better is þer louse þan in þe toune bo*u*nde
Adam toke by þe honde yonge Gamelyn
And euery of hem dronke a drauȝt' of wyñ 608
And after token he cours and wenten her way
T[h]o fonde þe Shyrreue nyst' but' non aye
¶ The Shirreue liȝt/ doune and went' into halle
And fonde þe lord fetred fast' wiþ alle 612
The Schirreue vnfetred hym riȝt' sone anoñ
And sent' aftere a leche to hele his rigge-boñ
Lat' we nowe þe fals knyȝt' lye in his care
And talke we of Gamelyn. and of his fare 616
Gamelyn into þe wode stalked stille
And Adam Spensere liked riȝt' ille
Adam swore to Gamelyn by seint' Richere
Nowe I see it' is mery to be a spencere 620
ȝit' leuer me were kayes to bere
þan walken in þis wilde wode my cloþes to tere
Adam seide Gamelyn dismay þe riȝt' nouȝt'
Mony good ma*n*nys child' in care is brouȝt' 624
As þei stode talkinge boþen in fere
Adam herd' talking' of men. *and* riȝt' nygh̄ he*m* þei were
Tho Gamelyn vnder wode loked ariȝt'
vij^xx^. of ȝonge men he seye wel ydiȝt' 628
Alle satte at' þe mete compas about'
Adam seide Gamelyn now haue I no dout'
Aftere bale co*m*meþ bote þorgh̄ goddis myȝt'
Me þink' of mete and drynk' I haue a siȝt' 632

Adam loked þoo vnder wode boughh
And whan he seghh mete was glad ynoghh
ffor he hoped to god to haue his dele
And he was sore alonged after a mele 636
As he seide þat worde þe mayst*er* outlawe
Saughh Adam and gamelyn vnder þe wode shawe
ȝonge men seide þe maistere by þe good rode
I am ware of gestes . god sende vs goode 640
ȝone ben twoo ȝonge men wel ydightt [leaf 71]
And p*ar*aventure þer ben mo who so loked riȝt
A-riseþ vp ȝonge men and fette he*m* to me
It is good þatt we weten whatt men þei be 644
Vp þer sterten .vij. from þe dynere
And metten wiþ Gamelyn and Adam Spencerr
Whan þei were nyghe hem þan seide þ*a*t ooñ
ȝeeldeþ vp ȝonge men ȝour bowes and ȝourr floon 648
þan seide Gamelyn þatt ȝongt was/ of// elde
Moche sorowe mote þei haue þatt to ȝou he*m* ȝelde
I Curs noon o*þer*e buttt rightt my silue
þoo ȝe fette to ȝou .v. þan be ȝe twelue 652
Whan þei hardd by his wordd *þat*t myȝtt was in his arme
Ther was noon of hem þatt woldd do hym harme
But seide to Gamelyn myldely *and* stille
Comeþ a-fore our Maister and seiþ to hy*m* ȝo*ur* wille 656
ȝonge men seide Gamelyn be ȝo*ur* lewte
Whatt man is ȝourr maister þatt ȝe wiþ be
Alle þei answerdd wiþ outt lesingt
Our maister is crowned of outlawe kingt 660
Adam seide Gamelyn go we in c*ri*stes name
He may neiþer mete ne drink warne vs for shame
If þatt he be hende and come of gentil bloodd
He wil ȝeue vs mete and drink and do us som gode 664
By seintt Iame seide Adam whatt harme þatt I gete
I wil auenture me þatt I had mete
Gamelyn and Adam wenttt forthh in fere
And þei grette þe Maisterr þatt þei fondd þere 668

Than seide þe Maister king' of outlawes
What' seche ȝe ȝonge men vnder þe wode shawes
Gamelyn answerd' þe king' *with* his croun
He most' nedes walk' in feeld' þat' may not' *in* to*un* 672
Sir*e* we walk not' here no harme to doo
But' ȝif we mete a dere to shete þ*er*to
As men þat' bene hungry *and* mow no mete fynd*e*
And beñ hard' bystad' vnder wode lynde 676
Of Gamelyns wordes / þ^e^ maist*er* had reuþe [leaf 71, back]
And seide ȝe shul haue ynow haue god my treuthñ
He bad hem sitte do*un* forto take rest'
And bad hem ete and drink' and þ*at* of þe best' 680
As þei eten and dronken wel and fyne
þan seide on to anoþ*er*. þis is Gamelyñ
þo was þe Maistere outlawe into counseile nome
And tolde howe it' was Gamelyn þ*at* þider was come 684
Anon as he herd' how it' was byfalle
He made him maister' vnder hy*m* ouer he*m* all*e*
W*ith*Inne þe iij. weke hym come tydinge
To þe Maistere outlawe þat' was her kinge 688
þat' he shuld come home his pees was made
And of þat' good tydinge he was ful glade
þoo seide he to his ȝonge men soþ forto telle
Me bene co*m*men tydinges ⁝ I may no lenger dwelle 692
Tho was Gamelyn anoon wiþ out' taryinge
Made maister' outlawe and crowned her kinge
Whan Gamelyn was crowned king' of outlawes
And walked had a while vnder þe wode shawes/ 696
þe fals kny*ȝ*t' bis broþ*er* was sherif *and* sire
And lete his broþ*er*e endite for hate *and* for ire
þoo were his boond-men sory ⁝ *and* no þing' glade
Whan Gamelyn her lord / wolfes hede was c*ri*ed *and* made
And sent' out' of his men wher þei my*ȝ*t' hy*m* fynde
ffor to go seke Gamelyñ vnder þe wode lynde
To telle hym tyding' þe wynde was wente
And al his good reued and al his men shent' 704

Whan þei had hy*m* founden on knees þei he*m* setten
And adoune w*ith* her hodes and her lord gretten
Sir' wreth ȝou not' for þe good rode
ffor we han brouȝt' ȝou tydyngg*es* but' þei be not' gode 708
Nowe is þi broþer Sherreue *and* haþ þe bayly
And haþ endited þe / and wolfes hede doþ þe crye
Allas seide Gamelyn þat' eu*ere* I was so sclak
þ*at*' I ne had broke his nek whan I his rigge brak' 712
Goþ greteþ wel myn husbondes and wif [leaf 72]
I wil be at' þe next' shyre haue god my lif
Gamelyn come redy to þe next' shire
And þ*er* was his broþer boþ lord and sire 716
Gamelyn boldely come into þe mote halle
And putt' a doun his hode / amonge þo lordes alle
God saue ȝou lordinggs þat' here be
But' broke-bak sherreue euel mote þ*o*u þee 720
Whi hast þou doñ me þ*at*' shame and vilonye
fforto lat' endite me / and wolfeshede do me crye
þoo þouȝt' þe fals knyȝt' forto bene awreke
And lette Gamelyn most' he no þing' speke 724
Might' þer be no grace. but' Gamelyn atte last'
Was cast/ in p*ri*son and fettred fast'
¶ Gamelyn haþ a broþere þat' hiȝt' sir Ote
Als good an knyght' and hende as myȝt goñ on fote 728
Anoon ȝede a massager' to þat' good knyȝt'
And tolde him al to-gidere how gamelyn was diȝt'
Anoon whan sir' ote herd howe Gamelyn was diȝt'
He was riȝt' sory and no þing' liȝt' 732
And lete sadel a stede and þe way na*m*me
And to his tweyne breþeren riȝt sone he ca*m*me
Sir' seide Sir' Ote to þe sherreue þoo
We bene but' þre breþeren shul we neu*ere* be mo 736
And þou hast' p*ri*soned þe best of vs alle
Such anoþ*er*e broþer euel mote hy*m* byfalle
Sir' Ote seide þe false knyght' lat' be þi cors
By god for þi wordes he shal fare þe wors 740

To þe kingges p*ri*son he is ynome
And þ*er* he shal abide to þe Iustise come
P*ar*de Seide Sir' Ote better it' shal be
I bid hym to maynprise þ*at* þou gr*au*nte me 744
To þe next' sitting' of delyuer*a*unce
And lat' þan Gamelyn stonde to his chaunce
Broþ*er*e in such a forward I take hy*m* to þe
And by þ^e fader soule þat' þe bigate *and* me 748
But' he be redy whan þe Iustice sitte [leaf 72, back]
þou shalt' bere þe Iuggement' for al þi g*re*te witte
I g*ra*unte wel seide Sir' Ote þat' it' so be
Lat' delyuere hym anoon and take hy*m* to me 752
Tho was gamelyn delyuered to Sir' ote his broþer'
And þat' nyght' dwelled þe oon wiþ þe oþer'
On the morowe seide Gamelyn to Sir' Ote þe hende
Broþer he seide I mote forsoþ from ȝou^n wende 756
To loke howe my ȝonge men leden her liff
Whedere þei lyuen in Ioie or ellis in striff
By god seide Sir' ote þat' is a colde rede
Nowe I se þat' alle þe Carke shal fal on my hede 760
ffor whan þe Iustise sitte and þou be not' yfound
I shal anoon be take and in þi stede I-bound
Broþer seide Gamelyn dismay ȝou nouȝt'
ffor by seint Iame in Gales þat' mony men haþ souȝt' 764
ȝif that god almyȝty holde my lif and witte
I wil be redy whan þe Iustice sitte
Than seide sir*e* Ote to gamelyn god shilde þ^e from shame
Come whan þou seest' tyme and bring' vs out' of blame 768
¶ Liþeneþ and listeneþ and holde ȝou stille
And ȝe shul here howe Gamelyn had al his wille
Gamelyn went' vnder þe wode Ris
And fonde þer pleying' ȝeng' men of p*ri*s 772
þo was ȝong' gamelyn riȝt' glad ynouȝe
Whan he fonde his men vnder wode bouȝe
Gamelyn and his men talkeden in fere
And þei had good game her maist*er* to here 776

His men tolde him of auent*ur*es *þat* þei had found
And Gamelyn tolde hem aȝein howe he was fast bounde
While Gamelyn was outlawe had he no cors
þer was no man þat for him ferde þe wors 780
But Abbott*es and* Pr*i*ours monk and chanone
On hem left he nouȝt whan he myȝt he*m* nome
While Gamelyn and his men made merþes ryve
þe fals knyght his broþer euel mot he thryve 784
ffor he was fast about boþ day and oþer [leaf 73]
ffor to hiren þe quest to hongen his broþ*er*
Gamelyn stode on a day and byheeld
þe wodes and þe Shawes and þe wild feelde 788
He þouȝt on his broþere how he hym byhette
þat he wold be redy whan þe Iustice sette
He þouȝt wel he wold wiþ-out delay
Come to-fore þe Iustice to kepen his day 792
And saide to his ȝonge men dighteþ ȝou ȝare
ffor whan þe Iustice sitte we most be þare
ffor I am vnder borowe til þat I come
And my broþer for me to p*ri*son shal be nome 796
Be seint Iame seide his ȝonge men and þ*o*u rede þ*er*to
Ordeyn̄ how it shal be and it shal be do
While Gamelyn was co*m*myng þer þe Iustice satte
þe fals knyȝt his broþer forȝate he not þat 800
To hire þe men of þe quest to hangen his broþer
þouȝe þei had not þat oon þei wold haue þat oþer
Tho come Gamelyn from vnder þe wode Ris
And brouȝt w*ith* hym ȝonge men of pris 804
I see wel seide Gamelyn þe Iustise is sette
Go a-forn adam and loke how it spette
Adam went into þe halle *and* loked al aboute
He segh̄ þer stonde lordes grete *and* stoute 808
And Sir*e* Ote his broþer fetred ful fast
þoo went Adam out of halle as he were a-gast
Adam seide to Gamelyn and to his felawes all
Sir*e* Ote stout fetered in þe mote hall 812

[. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
If gode ȝeue vs grace wel forto doo
He shal it' abigge þat' it' brouȝt' þerto / 816
þan seide Adam þat' lockes had hore
Cristes curs mote he haue þ*a*t hy*m* bonde so sore
And þou wilt' Gamelyn do after my rede
þer is noon in þe halle shal bere away his hede 820
Adam seide Gamelyn we wil not do soo
We wil slee þe giltif and lat' þe o*þer*e goo/
I wil into þe halle and w*ith* þe Iustice speke [leaf 73, back]
Of hem þat' bene giltif I wil ben awreke 824
Late no skape at' þe door take ȝonge men ȝeme
ffor I wil be Iustise þis day domes to deme
God spede me þis day at' my newe werk'
Adam come w*ith* me for þ*o*u shalt' be my clerk 828
His men answerde hy*m*. and bad don*e* his best'
And if þou to vs haue nede þ*o*u shalt' finde vs prest'
We wil stonde wiþ þe while þat' we may dure
And but' we worchen manly pay vs non*e* hure 832
ȝonge men said Gamelyn so mote I wel þe
A trusty maister ȝe shul fynde me
Riȝt' þere þe Iustise satte in þe halle
Inne went' Gamelyn amonges hem alle 836
Gamelyn lete vnfetter his broþ*er* out' of bende
þan seide Sir Ote his broþer þ*a*t was hende
þow haddest' almost' Gamelyn dwelled to long*e*
ffor þe quest' is out' on me þat' I shuld' honge 840
Broþer seide Gamelyn so god ȝeue me good rest'
þis day shul þei be honged / þ*a*t' ben on þe quest'
And þe Iustise boþ þat' is þe Iuge man
And þe Sherreue also. þorgh hym it bigan 844
Than seide Gamelyn to þe Iustice
Now is þi power don*e*. þe most' nedes rise
þow hast' ȝeuen domes þat' bene euel diȝt'
I wil sitten in þi sete and dressen/ he*m* ariȝt' 848

The Iustise satte stille and roos not' anone
And Gamelyn cleued his cheke bone
Gamelyn toke him in his armes *and* no more spake
But' threwe hym ouer þe barre and his arme brake 852
Dorst' noon to Gamelyn seie but' good
ffor feerd of þe company *þat* w*ith*-out' stoode
Gamelyn sette hym doun in þe Iustise sete
And Sire Ote his broþ*er*e by hy*m*. and Adam at' his fete
Whan gamelyn was sette in þe Iustise sede
Herken of a bourde þat' Gamelyn dede
He lete fetter þe Iustise and his fals broþ*er*e [leaf 74]
And did hem come to þe barre þat' on w*ith* *þat'* o*þer*e 860
Whan gamelyn had þus ydone had he no rest'
Til he had enquered who was on his quest'
fforto demen his broþer sire Ote forto honge
Er he wist' what' þei were hy*m* þouȝt' ful longe 864
But' as sone as Gamelyn wist' where þei were
He did hem euerechone fetter in fere
And bringgen hem to þe barre & setten in rewe
By my feiþ seide þe Iustise þe sherrue is a shrewe 868
þan seide Gamelyn to þe Iustise
þou hast' ȝoue domes of þe worst assise
And þe xij. Sesoures þat' weren on þe quest'
þei shul be honged þis day so haue I good rest' 872
Than seide þe sheref to ȝonge Gamelyn
Lord I crie þe mercie broþer art' þ*o*u myn̄
þerfor seide Gamelyn haue þou c*ri*stes curs
ffor and þow were maist*er*. I shuld haue wors 876
fforto make short' tale and not' to longe
He ordeyned hy*m* a quest' of his men stronge
þe Iustise and þe Sirreue boþ honged hie
To weyuen wiþ þe ropes and þe winde drye 880
And þe xij. Sisours sorowe haue þat' rekke
Aft þei were honged fast' by þe nekke
þus endeþ þe fals knyȝt' wiþ his trecherye
þat' eu*er*e had lad his lif i*n* falsnesse *and* folye 884

He was honged by þe nek and not' by þe purs
þat' was þe mede þat' he had for his faders curs ·
Sire Otes was eldest and Gamelyn was ȝenge
Wenten to her frendes / and passed to þe kinge 888
þei maden pees wiþ þe king' of þe best' sise
þe king' loued wel sir Ote & made hy*m* iustise
And after þe king' made Gamelyn in est *and in* west
þe cheef Iustice of his free forest' 892
Att his wiȝt' ȝonge men þe king' forgaf her gilt'
And siþen in good office þ^e^ king' haþ he*m* pilt'
Thus wa*n*ne Gamelyn his land and his lede
And wreke him on his enemyes. *and* quytte he*m* her mede
And Sire Ote his broþer made him his heire
And Siþen wedded gamelyn a wif good and faire
They lyued to-gidere þe while þat' cr*i*st' wold
And siþen was Gamelyn grauen vnder mold 900
And so shul we all ? may þer no man fle
God bring' vs to þat' Ioye þat' euer shal be
here endeþ þe tale of þe Coke.)

[*The Prologue and Tale of the Shipman follow, without any break in the MS.*]

¶ **And** [*on leaf* 74, *back*]

Thus gy*n*neþ þe prologe of þe shipman

Nowe frendes seide our hoost' so dere ¶ The Prologe.
How likeþ ȝou by Iohn̄ þe p*ar*donere
ffor he haþ vnbokeled wel þe male
He haþ vs tolde riȝt' a thrifty tale 4
As touching' of mysgouern*au*nce
I prey to god ȝeue hy*m* good chaunch*e*
As ȝe han herd of þise retou*r*es þre
Now gentil Marynere hertely I preye þe 8
Telle vs a good tale and þat' riȝt anon̄
It' shal be done by god & by seint' Iohn̄
Seide þis marinere as wel as eu*er* I can
And riȝt anoon his tale he bygan. 12

¶ **Thus endeþ þe prologe of þe shipman.**

[*No gap in the MS.*]

GROUP **B.** (β. FRAGMENT III.)

§ 4. THE SHIPMAN'S TALE.

And here bygynneþ þe shipman tale [*on leaf 74, back*]

A Marchaunt' whilom dwelled in seynt' denys
þat' riche was for whicħ men held hy*m* wys
A wif he had of excellent' bewte
And companable and reuerent' was she
Which is a þing' þat' causeþ more dispence
þan worþ is al þe chere and reuerence 1196
þat' men hem done at' feestes and at' daunces
suchħ salutacions and counten*au*nces
Passeþ as doþ þe shadowe vpoñ a waħ
But' woo is hym þat payen mote for aħ 1200
The Sely husbond algate he mot' paye
He mote vs cloþe and vs aray
ffor his owne worship richely [leaf 75]
In whicħ aray we dauncen Iolily 1204
And if þat' he may not' p*er*auenture
Or ellis list noon suchħ spence endure
But' þenkeþ þat' it' is waast' *and* ylost'
þan mote anoþer paien for þe cost' 1208
Or lene vs gold and þat' is p*er*ilous
This noble marchaunt' helde a noble hous
ffor whicħ he had alday grete repayre
ffor his largesse and for his wif was faire 1212
þat' wonder is but' herkeneþ to my tale
Amonge aħ his gestis. grete *and* smale
Ther was a monk a faire man *and* a bold
I trowe xxx^tl^. wynter he was olde 1216
That' euer in oon was drowing' to þat' place
þis yonge monk þat' was so faire of face

Aqueynted was so wiþ þat' good man
[. 1220
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
And eke þis monke of' which̄ I byganne 1224
Were boþ twoo yborn in oo vilage
þe monke hym cleymed as for cosynage
And he aȝein seiþ not' ones nay
But' was as glad þerof as foule of day 1228
ffor to his hert' it' was a grete plesañce
Thus bene þei knyut' wiþ eterne aliance
And eche of hem gan oþer ensure
Of breþerode þe whiles her lif' may dure 1232
ffree was dañ Io̅h̄n and namely of dispence
As in *þat'* hous and ful of diligence
To do plesaunce and also grete costage
He forȝate not' to ȝeue þe lest' page 1236
In alle þat' hous but' after her degre
He ȝaue þe lord̄ and siþen his Mayne
Whan þat' he came some maner honest þing'
ffor which̄ þei were as glad of his co*m*myng' 1240
As foule is fayne whan þe sonne vpriseth̄
No more herof as nowe for þis suffiseþ
But' so byfelle þis marchaunt' on a day
Shope hym to make redy his aray [leaf 75, back]
Towarde þe toune of Brugges for to fare
To byen þer a porcio*u*n of ware
ffor which̄ he haþ to Paris sent' anō̄n
A massagere and preied haþ dañ Io̅h̄n 1248
þat' he shuld come to seynt' denys to pleyn
Wiþ hym and wiþ his wif a day or tweyñ
Or he to brugges went' in al wise
This noble monk of which̄ I ȝou devise 1252
Haþ of his abbot' as hym list' licence
Bycause he was a man of high̄ p*ru*dence

And eke an officere out' forto ride
To seen her graunges and her beernes wide 1256
And vnto seint denys he com*me*þ anoñ
Who was so welcome as my lord' dañ Iohñ
Our dere cosyn ful of curtesie
W*ith* him brouȝt' he a Iubbe of Maluesie 1260
And eke anoþer ful of fyñe vernage
As volatile as ay was his his vsage
And þus I lat' hem .ete. boþ drink' *and* playe
This merchaunt' and þis monk a day or twaye 1264
The .iij. day þis Marchaunte vp ariseþ
And on his nede sadly hy*m* avisethñ
And vp into his counter hous goþ he
To rekne wiþ him self as wel may be 1268
Of þilk ȝere hou þat' it' wiþ hy*m* stode
And how he despended had his good
And ȝif þat' he encresed were or noñ
His bokes and his bagges mony oñ 1272
He leiþ to-fore him on his countyng' boord'
fful riche was his tresour and his hord'
ffor whiche ful fast' his counter door he shette
And eke he nold' þat' no man shuld' hy*m* lette 1276
Of his acomptes for þe mene tyme
And þus he sitte til it' was passed p*r*ime
Dan Iohñ was risen in þe morowe also
And in þe Gardyne walked to and fro 1280
And haþ his þingges seide ful curteisly [leaf 76]
This good wif come walking' prively
Into þe Gardyne þer he walked soft'
And hym salueth as he haþ doñ ful oft' 1284
A mayden childe cam in her companye
Which as hure lust' she may gouern and gye
ffor ȝit' vndere þe ȝeerd was þe mayde
O deer Cosyn myn dañ Iohñ she seide 1288
What' eileþ ȝou so rathe to arise
Nece q*uo*d he it' auȝt' ynoughñ suffise

V. houres forto slepe vpon a nyȝt
But' it' were for an olde palled wiȝt' 1292
As ben þise wedded men þat' lye *and* dare
As in a forme sitte a wery hare
Were al for-straught' wiþ houndes *g*rete *and* smale
But' dere nece whi beñ ȝe so pale 1296
I trowe certes þat' oure good man
Haþ ȝow labored siþ þe nyght' bygan
That' ȝou were nede to resten hastely
And wiþ þat' word he lough̄ ful merely 1300
And of his owne þouȝt' he wex al rede
This faire wif gan to shake her hede
And seide þus / ȝe god wote al quod she
Nay Cosin myne it' stont' not' so wiþ me 1304
ffor by þat' god þat' ȝaue me saule *and* lif
In aH̄ þe rewme of fraunce is *þer* no wif
þat' lasse lust' haþ to do þat' sorie play
for I may syngen alas and wele away 1308
That' I was born but' no wiȝt' q*uo*d she
I dar not' tellen how it' stant' wiþ me
werfore I þenk' out' of þis lond' to wende
Or ellis of my self to make an ende 1312
So ful I am of drede and eke of care
þis monk' bygan vpon þis wif to stare
A saide alas nay nece god forbede
þat' ȝe for eny sorowe or eny drede 1316
fforto ȝoure self but' telleþ me ȝo*ur* greef [leaf 76, back]
P*er*auenture I may in ȝoure meschief'
Conseile or helpe *and* þerfor telleþ me
Alle ȝour avis for it' shal be secre 1320
ffor on my portoos I make an oþe
þat' neuere in my lif' for leef ne loþe
Ne shal I of no counsaile ȝou by-wrey
þe same aȝein to ȝou quod she I seie 1324
By god and by þis portoos I swere
þei men me wold al into peces tere

Ne shal I neuer forto goo to helle
Bywrey a word of þing þat ȝe me telle 1328
Nouȝt for no cosinage ne alliance
But verrely for loue *and* affiance
Thus bene þei sworn and here vpon kist
And eche of hem told oþer what hem list 1332
Cosyn quod she if I had a space
As I haue non namely in þis place
þan wold I tellen a legend of my lif'
þat I suffred haue siþ I was a wif 1336
W*ith* myn husbond al þoughh he be ȝ*our* cosyn
Nay quod þis monke by god & by seint Martyn
He nys no more Cosyn vnto me
þan is þis lecf þat hongeþ on þe tree 1340
I clepe hy*m* so by seint denys in ffraunce
To haue þe more cause of a-queynt*a*unce
Of ȝowe þe which I haue loued specialy
A-bouen al wo*m*men sikerly 1344
þis swere I ȝou on my professio*u*n
Telleþ ȝour greef lest he come ado*u*n
And hasteþ ȝou and gooþ ȝoure way anon
My dere loue quod she o dan Iohn 1348
Iful leef me were þis counsaile to hide
But out it mote / it may no lengere bide
My husbond is to me þe worst man
þat euer was siþ þis world bygan 1352
But siþen I am a wif it sitte not to me [leaf 77]
To telle no wight of our p*r*iuete
Neiþer in bedde ne in noon oþ*er* place
God shild I shuld telle it for his g*ra*ce 1356
A wif ne shuld not seye of her husbond
But al honure as I can vnderstonde
Saue vnto ȝou þus moche telle I shal
As helpe me god he nys not worþ at al 1360
In no degre þe valewe of a flee
But ȝit me greueþ most his nygarde

And wel ȝe wote þat wo*m*men naturelly
desiren þingges. sex as wel as I. 1364
þei wolden þat her husbond shuld be
Hardy and wise. riche *and* þerto free
And boxom to his wif and fressh abedde
But by þat ilk lord þat for vs bledde 1368
ffor his honour*e* my self to aray
A sonday next I mote pay
An C. frankes or ellis am I lorn
ȝit were me leuere þat I were vnborn 1372
þan me were done a sclaunder or vilanye
And if myn husbonde eke myȝt espie
I nere but lost and þerfor I ȝou prey
lene me þis som*me* and ellis mote I dey 1376
Danne Iohn I seie lene me þise hundred frankes
P*ar*de I wold not faile þe my þonkes
If þat ȝou lust to do þat I ȝou pray
ffor a certeyn day I wil ȝow pay 1380
And to do ȝou what plesaunce *and* seruyse
þat I may do right as ȝou list devise
And but I do god take on me vengeance
As foule as had genylon of ff*r*aunce 1384
This gentil monke answerd in þis man*er*e
Nowe trewly myn owne lady dere
I haue quod he on ȝow so grete a rouþe
þat I ȝowe swere *and* pliȝt ȝou my trouþe 1388
That whan ȝoure husbonde is to fflaundres fare [leaf 77, back]
I wil delyuere ȝowe out of þis worldes care
I wil bringen ȝou an C. frankes
And wiþ þat he kaught hur*e* by þe shankes 1392
And hir*e* enbrased hard*e* and kissed oft
Goþ now ȝoure way quod he al stille *and* soft
And lat vs dyne as sone as eu*er*e ȝe may
ffor by my children it is prime of day 1396
Goþ nowe and beþ as trewe as I shal be
Nowe ellis god forbede sir*e* quod she

And forþ she gooþ as Ielous as a pye
And bad þe Cokes þat' þei shuld hem hie 1400
So þat' men myȝt' dyne and þat' anoñ
Vp to her husbond is þis wif goñ
And knokkeþ at' his counter boldely
Quy la quod he. Peter it' am I 1404
Quod she what' howe longe wol ȝe fast'
How longe tyme wil ȝe rekken *and* cast'
Ȝoure som*m*es ȝoure bokes *and* ȝoure þingges
þe deuel haue part' on al suche rekenyngges 1408
ȝe han ynogh̃ p*ar*de of goddes sonde
Come doune to day and lat' ȝoure bagge stonde
Ne be ȝe not' ashamed þat' dañ Ioh̃ñ
Shal fasting' al þis day elenge goñ 1412
What' lat' vs here masse and go dyne
Wiff quod þis man litel canst' þou devyne
þe Curious bysynes *þat'* we haue
ffor of vs Chapmen so god me saue 1416
And by þat' lord þat' called is seint' yve
Scarcely amonges .xij. tweyn shul þrive
Contynuely lasting' vnto our age
We may wel make chere and good visage 1420
And drive forþ þe world' as it' may be
And kepen our astate in p*ri*uete
Til we be dede or ellis þat' we pleye
A pilgrymage or gon out' of þe weye 1424
And þ*er*for haue I grete necessite [leaf 78]
Vpon þis queynt' world' to avise me
ffor euermore we mote stonde in drede
Of happe and fortune in our chapmanhede 1428
To fflaundres wil I goo to morowe at' day
And come aȝein as sone as eu*er*e I may
ffor which̃ my dere wif I þe biseke
As be to euery wight' buxom *and* meke 1432
And forto kepe our good be Curious
And honestly gouerne wel oure hous

Thow hast' nowe in euery maner wise
þat' to a þrifty husbonde may suffise 1436
þe lackeþ noon araye ne no vitaile
Of siluere in þi purs þou maist' not' faile
And wiþ þat' worde his counter door he shette
And doune he goþ no lenger nold' he lette 1440
And hastely a masse was þere saide
And spedely þe tables were ylade
And to þe dyner fast' þei he*m* spedde
And richely þis monke þe chapman fedde 1444
And after dynere daun Ioñn soberly
This Chapman toke a-part' al p*ri*uely
he seide him þus Cosyn it' stondeþ soo
þat' wel I see to brugges ȝe wil goo 1448
God and seint' Austyn speke ȝou and gide
I prei ȝou Cosyn wisly þat' ȝe ride
Gouerneþ ȝou also of ȝoure diete
And temp*er*aly and namely in þis hete 1452
Bitwix vs twey nedeþ no stronge fare
ffare wel Cosyn god kepe ȝou fro care
ȝif eny þinge þer be by day or by nyȝt'
If it' ligge in my power and in my myȝt' 1456
þat' ȝe me wil co*m*maunde in ony wise
It' shal be doñ riȝt' as ȝe wil devise
Oon þing' er þat' ȝe goñ if þ*at* ȝit may be
I wold' prei ȝou forto lene me 1460
An C ffrankes for a weke or twey
ffor certeyn beestes I mot' beye
To store wiþ a place þat' is owres [leaf 78, back]
God helpe me so I wolde it' were ȝoures 1464
I shal not' faile swerly of my day
Nouȝt' for a Mł. frankes a myleway
But' lat' þis þinge be secre I ȝou prey
And god of heuene spede ȝou in ȝour*e* weye 1468
And fare nowe wele myn owne cosyn dere
Graunt' mercy of ȝoure cost' & of ȝour*e* chere

This noble Merchaunt' gentely anoñ
Answerde and seide. O cosyn dañ Iohn 1472
Nowe sikerly þis is a smal request'
My golt' is ȝoures whan þat' ȝou lest'
And not' oonly my gold' but' my chaffare
Take what' ȝou lest' god shilde þat' ȝe spare 1476
But' oo þinge is ȝe knowe it' wel ynogh
Of Chapmen þat' her money is her plouȝe
We may creaunce while we haue a name
But' goldelees forto be is no game 1480
Paye it' aȝein whan it' lith in ȝoure ese
Aftere ȝoure myȝt' fayn wold' I ȝou plese
Thise hundred ffrankes he fette forþ anoñ
And priuely he toke it' to dañ Iohñ 1484
No wiȝt' in al þis world' wist' of þis lone
Sauyng' þis merchaunt' and dañ Iohn allone
þei dronken and romen and goñ to pleye
Til þat' dañ Iohn rideþ to his abbay 1488
þe morn come and forþ þis merchaunte rideþ
To fflaundres ward' his prentis wel hym gideþ
Til he came into brugges merely
Now goþ þis merchaunt' fast' and bisily 1492
Aboute his nede and bieþ and creaunseþ
He neiþer pleieþ at þe dis ne daunseþ
But' as a merchaunt' shortely forto telle
he lad his lif and þer I lete hym dwelle 1496
¶ The sonday next' þe merchaunt' was a-goñ
To seynt Denys y-commen is dañ Iohñ
Wiþ croune and berde fresh *and* newe yshaue
In al þe hous þer nas so lite a knaue [leaf 79]
Ne no wiȝt' ellis þat' he nas fayñ
ffor þat' my lord daun Iohñ was come aȝayñ
And shortely to her poynt' forto goñ
This faire wif acordeþ to daun Iohn 1504
And for þise hundred frankes he shuld al nyȝt'
Haue her in his armes bolt' vpriȝt'

And þis acorde *per*fourmed was in dede
In myrtñ al nyȝt' a bysy lif þei lede 1508
Til it' was day þat' dañ Iohñ went' his way
And bad þe mayne fare wele and haue good day
ffor noon of hem ne no wiȝt in þe toun
Han of dañ Iohñ none suspecio*un* 1512
And forþ he rideþ home to his abbaye
Or wher hy*m* lust' no more of hy*m* I saie
¶ This marchaunt' whan þat' ended was þe fare
To seint' Denys he gan forto repare 1516
And wiþ his wif he makeþ feest' *and* chere
And telleþ her þat' chaffare is so dere
þat' nedes most' he make a cheuysance
ffor he was bounden in a reconysañce 1520
To pay xx^ti^. þousand sheldes añon
ffor which þis marchaunt' is wont' to goñ
To borowe of certeyñ frendes þ*at* he hadde
A certeyn ffrannkes and som*me* w*ith* hy*m* he ladde 1524
And whan he was come into þe toūn
ffor greet' cheerte and grete affecci*oun*
Vnto dañ Iohñ him first' he goþ to pley
Nouȝt' for to borowe of hy*m* no money 1528
But' forto witt' and see of his welfare
And for to tellen him of his chaffare
As frendes done whan þei ben mette in fere
Dañ Iohñ him makeþ feest *and* mery chere 1532
And he him told aȝein ful specialy
Howe he had bouȝt' ful wel & *gra*ciously
Thonked be god al hole his m*er*chaundyse
Saue þat' he most' in al manere wise [leaf 79, back] 1536
Maken a chevisaunce as for his beste
And þan shuld he be in Ioye *and* reste
Dañ Iohñ answerd Certes I am fayn
þat' ȝe in hele be co*m*men home aȝeyñ 1540
And if þat' I were riche as haue I blisse
Of xx^ti^ M^l^. sheldes shuldest' þ*o*u not' mysse

ffor ȝe so kindely þis oþer day
Lent' me gold and as I can and maye 1544
I þonke ȝou by god *and* by seint' Iame
But' naþelees I toke vnto our dame
ȝoure wif at' home þe same gold aȝein
Vpon ȝoure benche she wote it' wel certeyn̄ 1548
By certeyne tokens þat' I can her telle
Now by ȝ*our* leue I may no lenger dwelle
Our abbot' wil out' of þis to*un* anon̄
And in his company I mot' gon̄ 1552
Grete wele our dame myn owene nece swete
And fare wele dere cosyn to we mete
¶ This Marchaunt' wiþ þat' was ful ware *and* wys
Creaunsed haþ and eke paide in Paris 1556
To certeyn lumbardes redy in her handes
This some of gold' and gate of hem þe bandes /
And home he goþ mery as a popeniaye
ffor wel he knewe he stood in such̄ araye 1560
þat' nedes most' he wynne in such̄ a viage
A þousand' frankes aboue al his costage
His wif ful redy mette hy*m* at' þe gate
As she was wont' of olde vsage algate 1564
And al̄ þat' nyȝt' in myrthe þei bysette
ffor he was riche and cleerly out' of dette
¶ Whan it' was day þis m*er*chaunt' gan enbrace
His wif al newe and kissed hir' on hir' face 1568
And vp he goþe and makeþ it' wonder toogh̄
No more quod she by god ȝe haue ynogh̄
And wāntonly aȝein wiþ hy*m* she pleide
Til at' þe last' þat' þis m*er*chaunt' seide [leaf 80] 1572
By god quod he I am a litel wroth̄
Wiþ ȝou my wif al-þo it' be me loth̄
And wote ȝe why by god as þat' I gesse
ffor ȝe haue made a mane*re* straungenesse 1576
Bytwixen me and my cosyn dau*n* Ioh̄n
ȝe shuld' haue warned me er I had gon̄

þat' he had ȝou an hundred fraunkes paide
By redy tokeñ and he hym held euel paide 1580
ffor þat' I to him spake of cheuysance
Me semed so as by his countenañce
But' naþe-lees by god heuen kinge
I þouȝt' not' to axe of hy*m* no þinge 1584
I prey þe wif ne do no more soo
Telle me alway er þat' I fro þe goo
If eny dett*our* haþ in myn absence
Ypaide þe lest' þorgh̄ þine negligence 1588
I myȝt' him axe as þing' þat' he haþ paide
This wif was not' afferd ne affraied.
Bot' boldely sche seide *and* þat' anoñ
Mary I diffie þat' fals monk dañ Ioh̄n. 1592
I kepe not' of his tokens neuer a dele
He toke me certeyn gold þis wote I wele
What' euel thedom on his monkes snoute
ffor god it' wote I went' wiþ-out' doute 1596
þat' he had ȝoue it' me by cause of ȝowe
To do þer-wiþ myn honure *and* my prowe
ffor Cosynage and eke for bele chere
þat' he haþ hadde ful often tyme here 1600
But' siþen I see I stonde in such̄ disioynt'
I wil answere ȝou shortely to þe poynt'
ȝe haue moo sclakker dett*our*s þa*n* am I
for I wil pay ȝow wel *and* redely 1604
ffro day to day *and* if so be I faile
I am ȝoure wif score it' on my taile
And I shal paye as sone as euer I may
ffor by my trouþe I haue on myn aray [leaf 80, back] 1608
And nouht' on waast' bystowed eu*er*y dele
And for I haue bystowed it' so wele
To ȝoure honour for goddes sake I say
As be not' wroþ but' lat' vs laugh̄ *and* play 1612
ȝe shullen my Ioly body haue to wedde
By god I nyl not' paye ȝou but' abedde

ffor3eue it me myn owne spouse dere
Turne hiderward and make better chere 1616
This Marchaunte seye þer was no remedye
And forto chide it ner but foly
Syþens þat þe þing may not amended be
Now wif he seide *and* I for3eue it þe 1620
But be þi lif ne be no more so large
kepe bette my good þis 3eue I þe in charge
þus enden now my tale and god vs sende
Tailling y-nowe into our lyues ende. 1624

¶ **Thus endeþ þe shipma*n*nys tale**

[*No break in the MS.*]

¶ þe prologe.

And here bygynneþ þe prologe of þe priores. [*on leaf* 80, *back*]

WEl seid' by corpus d*omin*us quod o*ur* hoste
Now longe mote þou saile by þe coste
Sir*e* Gentile Maister' gentyl marynere
God ȝeue þe monk a Mr̃. last' quade ȝere 1628
A ha felowes beþ ware of such̃ a Iape
þe Monk' put' in þe ma*n*nys hode an ape
And in his wyues eke by seint' Austyn̄
Draweþ no mo monkes into ȝ*our* Inne 1632
But' now passe ouer & lat' vs seke aboute
Who shal now telle first' of al þe route
Anoþer tale and wiþ þat' word he saide
As curteisly as it' had bene a Mayde 1636
My lady Priores by ȝoure leue
So þat' I wist' I shuld*e* ȝou not' greue
I wold*e* deme þat' ȝe telle shuld'
A tale next' if so be þat' ȝe wold' 1640
Now wil ȝe vouche sauf my lady dere
Gladly quod she and seide in þis manere. [leaf 81]

Thus endeþ þe prologe.

[*No break in the MS.*]

And here bygynneþ
þe Priores tale of Alma redemptoris mater.

[*The Prologue.*]

O lord our lord þi name how merveilous ¶ Domine dominus noster. þe Priores tale } capī
Is in þis large world ysprad quod she
ffor nouȝt only þi laude precious
Perfourmed is by men of dignite 1646
But by þe mouþe of Children þi bounte
Perfourmed is for in our brest soukinge
Somtyme shewen þei þine heryinge 1649

¶ Wherfor in laude as I can best *and* may
Of þe and of þe white lile floure
Whicħ þat þe bare and art a maide alway
To telle a storie I wol do my laboure 1653
Nouȝt þat I may encrece her honoure
ffor she he[r] self is honure and þerto rote
Of bounte next her sone of soules bote 1656

O Modere Mayden o. maiden moder fre
O bussh vnbrent brennyng in Moises siȝt
But vanysshe þ doune fro þe deite
þorgħ þine humblesse þe goost þat in þe liȝt 1660
Of whos vertue whan he in þine hert aliȝt
Conceyued was þe faders sapience
Helpe me to telle it in þi reuerence 1663

LAdy þi bounte and þine magnificence
þi vertue and þi grete humilite
þer may no þing expresse in no science
ffor somtyme lady er men preie to þe 1667
þow gost byforn of þi benignite
And getest vs to liȝt þorgħ þi preire
To gyden vs vnto þi sonne so clere 1670

My Conyng' is to waike. o blesful quene
fforto declare þi grete worþinesse [leaf 81, back]
þat' I ne may þe weght' not' susteyne
But' as a childe of xij monþe elde or lesse 1674
þat' can vnneþes eny word' expresse
Riȝt' so fare I and *per*fore I ȝowe preye
Gideþ my songe þat' I shal of ȝou seie 1677

[*THE TALE.*]

Ther was a child' in a grete Cite
Amonges cristen folk' *in* Iwerye
Susteyned by a lord of þat' cuntre
ffor foule vsure & lucre of vilany 1681
Hatful to Crist' and to his companye
And þorghe þe strete men myȝt' ride & wende
ffor it was fre and open at' eu*er*y ende 1684

A litel scole of C*ri*sten folk þ*er* stode
Doune at' þe ferþer ende in which þ*er* were
Children an hepe ycome of c*ri*stes blode
þat' lerned in þat' scole ȝere by ȝere 1688
Such manere doctr*i*ne as men vsed þere
þis is to saie to syngen and to rede
As smale children don*e* in her childhede. 1691

Amonges þise children was a widowes sone
A litel Clergio*un* .vij. ȝere of age
þat' day by day to scole was his wone
And eke also wher he segh þe ymage 1695
Of c*ri*stes modere had he in vsage
As him was tauȝt to knele ado*un* *and* seie
His Aue marye as he goþ by þe weye 1698

Thus haþ þis widowe her litel childe tauȝt'
Our blesful lady c*ri*stes moder dere
To worship ay *and* he forgate it' nouȝt'
ffor sely childe wil alday sone lere 1702
But' ay whan I remembre me on þis matere
Seint' Nicholas stant'.euere in my p*re*sence [leaf 82]
ffor he so ȝonge to c*ri*st' did reuerence 1705

This childe his litel boke lernynge
As he satte in þe scole at' his prymere
He **Alma redemptoris** / herd singe
As Children lered her antiphonere 1709
And as he durst' he drow hy*m* ner *and* nere
And harkened ay þe wordes *and* þe note
Til he þe first' vers couþe al by rote 1712

Nouȝt' wist' he what þe latyn was to say
ffor he so ȝonge and tender was of age
But' on a day his felawe gan he pray
To expoune hym þe songe in his langage 1716
Or tellen him whi þis songe was in vsage
This preide he hym to construe *and* declare
fful ofte tyme vpon his knees bare 1719

His felawe which̄ þat' elder was þan he
Answerd him þus þis songe I haue herde say
Was maked of our blisful lady fre
Her to saluo and eke her forto pray 1723
To bene our helpe and socour whan we dey
I Can no more expounde in þis matere
I lerne songe I can but' smal gramere 1726

And is þis songe ymade in Reuerence
Of Cristes modere seide þis Innocent'
Now certes I wil done my diligence
To conne it' er cristmas be went' 1730

þoo þat' I for my p*ri*mere shal be shent'
And shal be beten þries in an houre
I wil it' konne our lady to honoure 1733

His felawe tauȝt' hy*m* homward' p*ri*uely
ffro day to daye til he couþe it' by rote [leaf 82, back]
And þan he songe it wel *and* boldely
ffro word to word acording' to þe note 1737
þrise on a day it' passeþ þorgh̄ his þrote
To scoleward' and hamward' whan he went'
On cristes modere sette was his entent' 1740

As I haue seide þorgh̄-oute þe Iwerye
þis childe as he came to and froo
fful merely þan wold' he singe *and* crye
On **alma redemptoris** euermoo 1744
The swetnesse haþ his hert' perced so
Of cristes modere þat' to hir to prey
he can not' stint' of syngyng' by þe wey 1747

Our furst' foo þe serpent' Sathanas
þat' haþ in Iwes his waspes nest'
Vpswal and seide o Ebraike puple alas
Is þis a þing' to ȝou þat' his honest' 1751
þat' such̄ a boy shal walken as hym lest'
In ȝoure despite and singgyng' of such sentence
Which̄ is aȝeinst' ȝoure lawes reuerence 1754

From þennes forþ þe Iwes han conspired
This Innocent' out' of þis world' to chace
In homycide þerto han þei hured
þat' in a Aley had a prive place 1758
And as þe childe gan forby forto pace
þis cursed Iwe him hent' *and* helde fast'
And kitte his þrote and in a pitte hy*m* cast' 1761

I say þat' in a wardrobe þei hy*m* drwe
Wher þat' þise Iwes p*ur*gen entraile
O cursed folk of herawdes al nwe/
What' may ȝoure euel tent' ȝou' availe 1765
Mordere wil out' it' wil not' faile.
And namely þ*er* honur*e* of god shuld' sprede [leaf 83]
þe blood out' crieþ of ȝoure cursed dede 1768

O Matir sounded to virginite
Now maist' þow syngen folowing' eu*er*e in oñ
þe white lombe celestial quod he
Of which þe grete eu*au*ngelist' seynt' Ioh̃n 1772
In Pathmos wrote which seyn þei þ*at* gōn
Byfore þis lombe and sing*e* a songe al nwe
That' neuer flesshly wo*m*men þei knewe 1775

This poor widowe waiteþ al þat' nyȝt'
After this litel childe. but' home cam he nouȝt'
ffor whom as sone as it' is daies liȝt'
Wiþ face pale for drede and bisy þouȝt' 1779
She haþ atte scole and ellis whe[re] him souȝt'
Til fynaly she gan so fer espie
þat' he was sene last' in þe Iwerye 1782

Wiþ moders pite in her brest' enclosed
She goþ as þouȝe she were half out' of mynde
To euery place wher she haþ supposed
By liklihede her child' to fynde 1786
And euere on cristes modere meke and kynde
She cried and at' þe last' þus she wrouȝt'
Amonge þe cursed Iwes she him souȝt' 1789

She freyneþ and she preieþ pitously
To euery Iwe þat' dwelte in þilk place
To telle her if her child went' hem bye
þei seiden nay but' Ih*esus* of his grace 1793

ȝaue in her þouȝt' inwiþ a litel space
That' in þat' place after her sone she cried/
Ther he was cast' in a pitte beside 1796

O grete god þat' *perfourmed* þi lawde
By mouþe of Innocence lo here þi myȝt' [leaf 83, back]
This Gemme of chastite þis emeraude
And eke of Marterdom þe rubie briȝt' 1800
Ther he wiþ þrote y-corue lay vpriȝt'
He **alma redemptoris** gan to singe
So longe þat' al þe place gan to rynge 1803

The Cristen folk' þat' þorgh þe strete went'
Inne comen forto wondren on þis þinge
And hastely þei for þe prouost' sent'
He come anone wiþ-out' tariynge 1807
And herieþ crist' þat' is of heuen kynge
And eke his modere honoure of man kynde
And after þat' þe Iwes lete he bynde 1810

This child' wiþ pitous lamentacioñ
Vptaken singyng' his songe alway
And wiþ honure of grete processioñ
þei Carien hym to þe next' abbay 1814
His modere swownyng' by þe bere lay
Vnneþes myȝt' þe puple þat' was þere
þis new Rachell bring' fro his bere 1817

Wiþ torment' and *with* shameful deþ ilkoñ
This prouost' doþ þise Iwes to sterue
þat' of þis mordre wist' and þat' anōn
He nolde none such̄ cursednesse obserue 1821
Euel he shal haue þat' euel wol deserue
þerfore wiþ wilde hors he did hy*m* drawe
And after þat' he henge him by þe lawe 1824

¶ Vppon þis bere ay litl̄ þis Innocent'
Byforn þe chief autere whiles masse last'
And after þat' þe Abbot' wiþ his Couent'
had spedde hem forto bury hy*m* fast' 1828
And whan þei holy water on hy*m* cast'
ȝit' spake þe childe whan spreynt' was þ^e holy watere [lf 81]
And songe .O alma redemptoris matere 1831

This Abbot' which̄ þat' was an holy man
As monkes be or ellis ouȝten to be
þis ȝonge childe to coniure þei bygan
And saide good childe I hailse þe 1835
Be vertue of þe holy trinite
Telle me what' is þi cause to singe
Siþen þat' þi þrote is kitte at' my semynge 1838

My þrote is kitte vnto my nek' bone
Saide þis childe and as be way of [k]ynde
I shuld haue deied longe tyme a-gone
But' Ih*es*u crist' as ȝe in bokes fynde 1842
Wol þat' his glorie last' *and* be in mynde
And for þe worship of his moder dere
ȝit' may I singe .o **Alma**. loude *and* clere 1845

This welle of me[r]cye cristes modere swete
I loued alway as aftere my co*n*nynge
And whan þan I my lif shulde lete.
To me she cam and bad me for to singe 1849
þis Anteme verrely in my mynde deyinge
As ȝe han herde. and whan þat' I had songe
Me þouȝt' she leide a greyn vpon my tonge 1852

Wherfore I singe and singe mote certeyn
In honure of þe blisful martere fre
Til of my tunge of taken is þe greyn̄
And aftere þat' þus seide she to me 1856

My litel childe now wol I fecche þe
Whan þat' þe greyn is fro þi tunge ytake
Be not' agast' I wil þe not' forsake 1859

This holy monke þis abbot' hym mene I
His tunge out' kaught' and toke away þ^e greyn/ [leaf 84, back]
And he ȝaue vp þe goost' ful softely
And whan þe abbot' had þis wonder seyn 1863
His salte teeres striked doun as reyn/
And gruf he fille al plat' to þe ground
And stille he lay as he had bene ybound 1866

The Couent' eke lay vpon þe payment'
Weping' and herying' cristes moder dere
And after þat' þei rise *and* forþ bene went'
And toke away þis martere fro his bere 1870
And in a toumebe of Marble stonys clere
Enclosen þei his litel body swete
Ther he is nowe god leue vs forto mete 1873

O yonge hugh of lyncoln sclayn also
With cursed Iwes as it' is notable
ffor it' nys but' a litel while agoo
Prei eke for vs we sinful folk vnstable 1877
þat' of his mercy god so merciable
On vs his grete mercy multiplie
ffor reuerence of his modere marye. 1880

¶ **Here endeþ þe priores tale.**

[*The Man of Law's Prologue and Tale follow in the MS.*]

GROUP B. (α. FRAGMENT II.)

§ 1. MAN OF LAW'S HEAD-LINK.

PETWORTH MS.

¶ Prologus viri legis

And here by- gynnes þe prologe of þe man of lawe [on leaf 84, back]

Oure hoost segh wel þat þe briȝt sonne
þe arke of þis artificial day hadde ronne
þe feerþ part and half an houre or more
And þough he were not depe expert in lore 4
He wist it was þe xviij. day
Of Aprile þat is massagere to may
And seghe wel þat þe shadowe of euery tre
Was as in length þe same quantite 8
þat was þe body erecte þat caused it
And þerfore by þe shadowe he toke his witte
þat Phebus which þat shoon so clere *and* briȝt
Degrees was xlv. clombe on hight 12
And for þat day as in þat latitude [leaf 85]
Hit was .x. of þe clok he gan conclude
And sodeynly he pliȝt his hors about
Lordingges quod he I warne ȝow al þis route 16
þe feer party of þis day is goon
Now for þe loue of god and of seint Iohn
Lescþ no tyme as ferforþ as ȝe may
Lordingges þe tyme it wasteþ boþ nyȝt *and* day 20
And steleþ from vs what priuely slepinge
And what þourgh neglygence in our wakinge
As doþ þe streme þat turneþ neuere agayn /
Descending from þe mounteyn into playn 24
Wel can Senec and many a philosophre
Byweillen tyme more þan gold in Cofre
ffor losse of Catel may recouered be
But losse of tyme shendeþ vs quod he 28

It' wil not' come a3ein wiþ-outen drede
No more þan wil Malkyns Maidenhede
Whan she haþ lost' it' in her wantonesse
Lat' vs nout' mowlen þus in Ydelnesse 32
Sire man of lawe quod he so haue I blesse
Telle vs a tale anoon as forward' es
3e bene submitted þourgh 3*our* fre assent'
To stonden in þis cas at' my Iuggement' 36
Aquiteþ 3ou nowe of 3oure biheest'
þan han 3e done 3oure devoire at' þe leest'
Oost q*uo*d he dep*ar*deux ich assent'
To breke forward' is not' myn entent' 40
Biheest' is dette and I wil holde fayne
Al my biheest' I can no better seyne
ffor such lawe as a man 3eueþ anoþ*er* wi3t'
He shuld hy*m* self vsen it' by ri3t' 44
Thus wil our text' but' naþeles certeyne
I can ri3t' now no trusty tale seyne
þat' chaucere þou3t' he can but' lewdely
On meters and in rymyng' craftely 48
Haþ seide hem in such englissh as he can [leaf 85, back]
Of olde tyme as knoweþ mony a man
And if he haue nou3t' seide hem leue broþer'
In oo boke he haþ seide in a-noþ*er* 52
ffor he haþ told' of louers vp *and* do*un*
Moo þan Ovide made mencio*un*
In his Epistels þat' bene ful olde
What' shuld I tellen hem siþ þei be tolde 56
In 3ouþe he made of Ceys *and* Alcione
And siþ haþ he spoke of euerychone
Thise noble wyues and þise louyers eke
Who so þat' wol his large volom seke 60
Cleped þe Seintes legende of Cupide
þer may he see þe large woundes wide
Of lucresse and of Babylan Tysbe
þe swerd' of Dido for þe fals ene 64

The tre of Phillis for hir demophon
þe pleynte of Dyanyre *and* of Hermyon
Of Andrian and of ysiphilee
þe barayn Isle stonding' in þe see 68
þe dreynt' leander for his erro
The teres of Elyne and eke þe woo
Of Brixseid' and of þe ladomya
The cruelte of quene Medea / 72
þe litel children honing' by þe hals
ffor þe Iason þat' was of loue so fals
Of ypinistra penolope Alceste
ȝoure wivehode he co*m*mendeþ wiþ þe best' 76
But' certeynly no worde ne writeþ he
Of þilk wicke ensample of canace
þat' luffed her oune broþ*er*e synfully
Of such*e* cursed storis I seie fye 80
Or ellis of Tiro Appolloneus
How þat' þe cursed king' Antiocus
Biraft' his douȝter of her maydenhede
þat' is so horrible a tale for to rede 84
Whan he her drewe þorgh-out' þe pament' [leaf 86]
And þerfor he of ful avisement'
Nold neuer write in none of his s*er*mons
Of such̄ vnkinde abhomynacions. 88
Ne I ne wil none reherce if þat' I may
But' of my tale how shal I done þis day
Me were loth̄ be likned doutlees
To muses þat' men clepen pieriades 92
Methanorphoseos wote what' I mene
But' naþelees I recche not' a bene
þouȝe I come after hym wiþ hawe bake
I speke in prose and lat' hy*m* rymes make 96
And wiþ þat' word' he wiþ a sobre chere
Bygan his tale as ȝe shal after here 98

¶ **Thus endeþ þe prologe** [*no break in the MS.*]

And here bygynneþ þe Mannys of lawe Tale ¶ Incipit fabula

[*Prologue.*]

O hateful harme condicion of pouert' 99
Wiþ þrust' wiþ cold' with hunger so *confounded*'
To asken help þe shamest' in þine hert'
If þowe now aske wiþ nede art' þou so wounded' 102
þat' verrey nede vnwrappeþ al þi wonud hed
Maugre in þine hede þou most' for indigence
Or stele or begge or borowe þi dispence 105

Thow blamest' *crist*' and seist' ful bitt*er*ly
He mysdepartеþ ricches temporal
þi neighb*our* þow witest' sinfully
And saist' þou hast' to litel and he haþ all 109
P*ar*fay seist' þ*o*u somtyme he rekne shall
Whan þat' his tale shal brenne in þ^e glede
ffor he nouȝt' helpeþ nedeful in her nede 112

Herken what' is þe menyng' of þe wise
Bett' is to dyen þan haue indigence
þi self neighboure wil þe despise
If þou be poor fare wele þi reuerence. 116
ȝit' of þe wise man take þis sentence [leaf 86, back]
Al þe daies of poor men ben wikke
Be war þ*er*fore er þou come in þ*at* prikke 119

ȝif þ*o*u be poor þi broþer hateþ þe
And alle þi freendes fleen fro þe alas
O riche marchauntes ful of wele be ȝe
O noble prudent' folk as in þis cas 123
ȝoure bagges bene not' filled w*ith* ambees aas
But' wiþ sise cynk þat' renneþ for ȝ*our* cha*n*ce
At' Cristes mas mery may ȝe dau*n*ce 126

ȝe seken londe and ffe for ȝ*our* wynnyngges
As wise folk þat' knowen al þe state
Of regnes ȝe bene fadere of Tithenges
And tales boþen of pees & debate 130
I was riȝt' nowe of tales desolate
Ner þat' a marchaunt' gone is mony a ȝere
Me taught' a tale which þ*a*t ȝe shal here 133

[*Only the usual stanza-gap of a line in the MS.*]

[*As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines to which they refer.*]

l. 197. ¶ Ceptra pharonei fr*atru*m discordia thebe
¶ ffla*m*ma*m* phetentis deutalionis aque
¶ In stellis p*ri*ami. sp*ecie*s audacia t*ur*ni
¶ Sens*us* vlixeus herculies q*ue* vigor [MS, leaf 87, back.]

l. 295. ¶ Vn*de* Philome*us* li*bro* .j°. c°. 8°. p*rimi* motus celi duo su*nt* q*uorum* vn*us* est qui mouet tot*um* semp*er* ab oriente & occidente vno m*odo* sup*er* orbes & c*etera*. It*a* alit*er* ve*ro* motus e*st* q*ui* mouet orbe*m* stellar*um* c*urrencium* co*ntra* motu*m* p*rimum* viz ab occidente in orient*em* s*uper* alios duos polos & c*etera*. Om*nes* .*enim*. co*n*cordati sunt q*uod* elocc*ione*s sint debiles n*isi* in di*vitibus*. h*abent* .*enim*. isti licet debilitent*ur* eor*um* electiones radicem .i. nati*vi*tates eor*um* q*uæ* *con*fortat omne*m* planeta*m* debilem in Itinere. Hec. Ph*ilosoph*us. [MS, leaf 89.]

l. 421. ¶ Semp*er* mu*n*dane leticie tristicia repentina succedit. Mundana *er*go felicitas multis amaritudinib*us* est resp*er*sa Extrema gaudii. luct*us* occupat. Audi *er*go salubre consilium *in* die bo*norum* ne i*m*memor sis malor*um*. [MS, leaf 91.]

l. 771. ¶ Quid t*ur*pius ebrioso cui fetor in ore. tremor i*n* corp*ore*. qui p*romit* stulta. p*rodit* occulta Cui mens alienat*ur* facies t*ra*nsfor-*ma*tur nullu*m* e*nim* latet secretu*m*. vbi regnat Eb*r*ietas. [MS, leaf 96, back.]

l. 925. ¶ O ext*r*ema libidinis turpitudo que non solum mente*m* effeminat. *sed et* corpus en*er*uat semp*er* sequ*un*t*ur* dolor & penitencia p*ost* &c*etera*. [MS, leaf 99.]

l. 1127. ¶ A mane vs*que* ad vesp*era*m mutabitur te*m*pus. tenent tympanu*m* & gaude*n*t ad sonu*m* organi. [MS, leaf 102, back.]

l. 1134. Q*u*is vnq*u*am vnica*m* die*m* totam duxit in sua delectacione iocu*n*da*m* que*m* in aliq*u*a parte die reatus consciencie vel impetus ire vel mot*us* co*n*cupiscencie inde no*n* turbauerit que*m* liuor invidie vel ardor auaricie vel ti*m*or sup*er*bie no*n* vexau*er*it. q*uem* aliq*u*a iactura vel offensa vel passio no*n* co*m*mouerit & c*etera*. [MS, leaf 102, back.]

[*TALE. PART I.*]

In Surry whilom dwelt' a companye
Of Chapmen riche *and* þerto sadde *and* trewe
þat' wide where setten her spicerie
Cloþes of golde and saten riche of hue 137
Her chaffare was so þrifty *and* so nwe
þat' euery wiȝt' haþ deynte to chafare
Wiþ hem and eke to sellen hem her ware 140

Nowe fille it' þat' þe maisters of *þat'* sort'
Han shapen hem to Rome forto wende
Were it' for chapmanhode or for disport'
Noon oþer massage wold þei þider sende 144
But' co*m*men hem self to Rome þis is þe ende
And in suche place as þouȝt' he*m* au*a*untage
ffor her entent' þei taken her herbergage 147

Soiourned han þise m*er*chaundes in þat' toun [leaf 87]
A certeyn tyme as fille to her plesaunce
But' so byfelle þat' þe excellen renoun
Of þe Emp*er*our douȝtere Dame Casta*u*nce 151
Reported was w*ith* euery circumsta*u*nce
Vnto þise Surryen merchauntz *in* such wise
ffro day to day as I shal ȝou deuise 154

This was þe comon vois of euery man
Our Emp*er*our of Rome god hy*m* see
A doughter haþ þat' siþe þe world bygan
To rekne as wel her goodnes as bewte 158
Nas neuere such anoþer as is she
I prei to god in honure hir sustene
And wolde she were of al Europe þ^e^ quene ¶ Europia est' tercia / pars mundi

In hure is hegh bewte wiþ-oute pride
ȝouþe wiþ-out' grenehode or folye
To all her werkes vertue is her gide
Humblesse haþ sclayn in hire al tyrannye 165
She is a myrour of al Curtesie
Hire herte is verrey chambere of holynesse
Her hand mynystre of fredam for almesse 168

And al þis vois was soþ as god is trewe
But' nowe to purpoos lat' vs turne ageyn
þise Merchauntz han do fraught her shippes newe
And whan þei han þis blisful Maiden seyn̄ 172
Howe to Surrey ben þei went' ageyn̄
And done her nedes as þei han do ȝore
And lyuen in wele I can say ȝou no more 175

Now fille it' þat' þise marchauntes stoden in grace
Of hym þat' was þe Sawden of Surrye
ffor whan þat' þei came from eny strañge place
He wolde of his benygne Curtesie. 179
Make hem good chere and bysilie aspie [leaf 87, back]
Tiþingges of sondry rewmes forto lere
þe wondres þat' þei myȝt' se or here 182

Amonges oþere þingges specialy
Thise marchauntes han hym tolde of dame custaunce
So grete noblesse in ernest' ceriously
þat' þis sowden haþ caught' so grete plesaunce 186
To han her figure in his remembraunce
And al his lust' and al his bysy cure
Was forto loue her' þe whilis his lif may dure 189

Perauenture in þe þikke large book
Which̄ þat' cloped is heuene ywriten was
Wiþ sterres whan þat' he his birth̄ toke
þat' he for loue shuld' han his deth̄ allas 193

ffor in þe sterres clerer þan is þe glàs /
y-writen god wote who coude it redo
þe deþe of eucry man *with*-outen drede 196

In Sterris mony a wynter þer byforñ [*Latin note*, p. 133.] 182
Was writen þe deþ of Ector achilles
Of pompe Iulius er þei were borñ
þe strif of Thebes and of hercules / 200
Of sampson turuno *and* of Soc*rat*es
þe deþ but mennys wittes beñ so dulle
þat no wiȝt can wel rede it at þe fulle 203

This souden for his p*ri*ve counseł sent
And shortly of þis matere forto pase
He haþ to hem declared his entent
And seide hem certeyn but he myȝt haue g*rac*e 207
To haue custance wiþ-Inne a litel space
He nas but dede *and* charged hem in hie
To shapen for his lif somme remedye 210

Dyuers men dyuers þingges seiden
þe argumentz Custen vp and Douñ [leaf 88]
Mony a sotele resoñ forþ þei leideñ
þei speken of magik and abusioñ 214
But fynaly as in conclusioñ
þei can not seen in þat noñ au*au*ntage
Ne in noon oþer way sauf mariage 217

Than segñ þei þere in suchñ difficulte
Be way of reson forto speke al playñ
By cause þat þer was suchñ dyuersite
Bytwene hor boþ lawes þat þei seyñ 221
þei trowe þat no cristen p*ri*nce wold fayn
Wedden his childe vnder our*e* lawes so swete
þat vs was taught be Mahoun our p*ro*phete 224

And he answered raþer þan I lese
Custance I wil be Cristened doutlees
I mote bene hers I may non o*þer*e chese
I prei ȝou holde ȝoure argumentes in pees 228
Saueþ my lif and beþ not' rechelees
To geten hur*e* þat' haþ my lif in cure
ffor in þis woo I may not' longe endure 231

What' nedeþ gretter dilatacioñ
I saye by tretis and Embassadrye
And by þe popes mediacioñ
And alle þe cherch̄ and al̄ þe Chivalrye 235
þat' in destruccioñ of Mawmetrie
And in encrees of cristes lawe dere
þei bene acorded so as ȝe shal here 238

Now þat' þe Sawden and his Baronage
And al his lieges shuld y*cri*stened be
And he shal haue custance i*n* mariage
And certeyn gold' I note what' quantite 242
And herto founden sufficient' suerte
This same accorde was sworn in eiþer side [leaf 88, back]
Now faire custaunce almyȝty god þe gyde 245

Now wold' som*me* men waiten as I gesse
þat' I shulde tellen al þe purviaunce
That' þe Emp*er*our of his noblesse
haþ shapen for his douȝter dame Custa*u*nce 249
Wel may men knowe þat' so grete ordyn*au*nce
May no man telle in a litel clause
As was araied for so hie a cause 252

Bisshopes bene shapen wiþ hur*e* forto wende
Lordes ladys knyȝtes of reno*u*n
And o*þ*er folk ynow þis is þe ende
And notified is þorgh-out' þe toun 256

That' euery wiȝt' *with* grete deuocio*un*
Shulde preye crist' þat' he þis mariage
Resceyue in gre and spede þis viage 259

The day is co*mm*en of her dep*ar*tinge
I seie þe wooful day fatal is come
That' þer may be no lenger tariynge
But' forþward' þei hem dressed al and some 263
Custance þat' *with* sorowe is al ouercome
fful pale arist' and dresseþ hur*e* to wende
ffor wel shee seeþ þer is noon o*þere* ende 266

Allas what' wondere is it' þouȝe she wepte
þat' shal be sent' to straunge naciõñ
ffro frendes þat' so tenderly her kepte
And to be bounden vnder subiecciõñ 270
Of oon she knoweþ nouȝt' his *con*diciõñ
Husbondes bene aH good and han ben ȝore
þat' knowen wives I dar seie ȝou no more 273

Fadere she seide þ' wrecched child custance
Thi ȝonge douȝtere fostred vp so soft' ¶ Cap. 9 [leaf 89]
And ȝe my modere my souereyn plesaunce
Ouer al þinge outaken *cri*st aloft' 277
Custaunce ȝoure child' hir*e* recomanndeþ oft'
Vnto ȝoure grace for I shal to Surrye
Ne shal I neuere seyn ȝow more wiþ ye 280

Allas vnto þe Barbarye nacioñ
I most' anoon siþ it' is ȝoure wille
But' crist' þat' starf' for oure redempcioñ
So ȝeue me grace his heestes to fulfille 284
I wrecched wo*mm*an no fors þouȝe I spille
Wo*mm*en ben borñ to thraldom and pen*au*nce
And to bene vnder mannes gou*er*nau*n*ce 287

I trowe at' Troye whan purr*us* brak þe wall
Or ylyon þat' brent' Thebes þat' Cite
Nor Rome for þe harme þorgh Hanyball
þat' Romaynes han venqwisshed tymes þre 291
Nas herd such tendere weping' for pite
As in þe Chambere for her departinge
But' forþ she mote wher she wepe or singe 294

O first' mouynge cruel firmament' [*Latin note*, p. 133.] 182
Wiþ þine dyurnal sweigh þat crowdest' aye
And hurlest' al from eest' to occident'
That' naturelly wold hold anoþ*er* waye 298
þi Crowding' sette þe heuene in such araye
At' þe bygynnyng' of þis feers viage
That' cruel mars haþ sclayn þis mariage 301

Infortunat' ascendent' tortuous
Of which þe lord is helplees falle allas
Out' of his Angle in to þe derkest' hous
O Mars o Atazir in this caas 305
O feble mone vnhappy bene þi paas./
þow knettest' þe þer þou art' not' receyued [leaf 89, back]
Ther þou were wele fro þennes now art' þou weyued 308

Imprudent' Emp*er*our of Rome alas ¶ Inspirant
Was þer no Philisophre in al þi toun
Is no tyme bette þan oþ*er* in such cas/
Of viage is þer non electioñ 312
Namely to folk of high *con*dicioñ
Nat' whan a roote is of a birþ yknowe
Allas ȝe bene to lewde or to sclowe 315

The shippe is brouȝt' þis woful faire mayde
Solempnely wiþ euery circu*m*staunce
Nowe Ihesu crist' be wiþ ȝou al she seide
Ther is no more but' fare wel faire Custa*u*nce 319

She peynep hure to make good countenaunce
And forpe I lete hire saile in pis manere
And turne I wil ageyn to my matere 322

The modere of pe Sowden welle of vices
Espied hap her sones pleyn entent
Howe he wil lete his olde sacrifises
And rizt anone she for her counsel sent 326
And pei ben commen to knowe what she ment
And whan assembled was pis folk in fere
She sette her doune and seide as ze shal here 329

Lordes quod she ze knowe euerichoñ
Howe pat my sone in poynt is forto lete
pe holy lawes of our akkaroñ
Zeuene by goddes massagere Makamete 333
But oñ avowe to grete god I hete
pe lif shal raper out of my body sterte
Or makametes lawe out of myñ herte. 336

What shuld vs tyden of pis newe lawe
But praldome to our bodies and penaunce [leaf 90]
And afterward in helle to ben drawe
ffor we reveied Mahonne our creaunce 340
But lordes wil ze maken assurance
As I shal sein assenting to my lore
And I shal make vs sauf for euermore 343

¶ Thei sworen and assenten euery man
To lyve and dye wip hure and by hure stonde
And euery in pe best wise he can
To strengthen hure shal al his freendes fonde 347
And she hap pis emprise taken on honde
Which ze shal here pat I shal devise
And to hem alle she spak in pis wise 350

We shul first' feyn vs *cri*stendom to take
Cold watere shal not' greue vs but' a lite
And I shal suche a reuel and feest' make
þat' as I trowe I shal þe Sowden quite 354
ffor þouȝe his wif be cristned neuer so white
She shal haue nede to wassh̄ awaye þe rede
þough̄ she a font' ful of water wiþ her lede 357

O Sawdenesse Roote of Iniquite
Virago þou Semyram þe Second'
O Serpent' vnder femyninete
Like to þe Serpent' depe in helle ybound' 361
O feyned wo*m*man al *þat'* may confound'
Vertue and Innocence þorgh̄ þi malice
Is bredde in þe as nest' of euery vice 364

O Sathan envious siþ þilk day
þat' þou were chased fro o*ur* heritage
Wel knewest' þou to wo*m*men þ^e^ old' way
þou madest' Eva to bringe in seruage 368
Thow wilt' fordone cristen mariage
Thyn̄ Instrument' so wele away þe while
Makestowe of wo*m*men wham þou wilt' begile [leaf 90, back]

This Sowdonesse whom I *þus* blame *and* warye
Lat' prively her counsel gon*e* her way
What' shuld I in þis tale lenger tarye
She rideþ to þe Sawden on a daye 375
And seide him þat' she wold reneye her laye
And Cristendom of preestes hondes fonge
Repenting' she heþen was so longe 378

Biseching' him to done her *þat* honoure
þat' she most' han þ^e^ cristen folk to feest'
To plesen hem I wil do my labo*ur*
þe Sawden seiþ I wil don̄ at' ȝo*ur* heest' 382

And knelinge þonkeþ hure of þat' request'
So glad he was he nyst' what' to seye
She kist' her sone and hom she goþ her way 385

[*PART II.*]

Arriued bene þise cristen folk to londe
In Surrye wiþ a grete solempne Route
And hastely þis Sowden sent' his sonde
ffurst' to his modere and al þe regne aboute 389
And seide his wiff was commen out' of doute
And preide hure forto riden ageyn þe quene
The honure of his regne to sustene 392

Grete was þe prees and richĩ was tharray
Of Surriens and romaynes met' yfere
The modere of þe Sowden riche *and* gay
Resceyueþ her' wiþ as glad a chere 396
As eny modere myȝt her douȝter' dere
And to þe next' Cite þer beside
A soft' paas solempnely þei ryde 399

Naughĩt' trowe I þe triumphe of Iulius
Of whichĩ þat' lucan makeþ suchĩ a boost'
Was ryallere ne more curious [leaf 91]
Than was þe assemple of þis blisful hoost' 403
But' þis scorpion þis wikke goost'
þe Sawdenesse for al her flateringe
Cast' vnder þis ful mortally to stynge 406

The Sowden commeþ hym self' sone after' þis
So Rialli þat' wonder' is to telle
He welcommeþ hure with alle ioye *and* blis
And þus in merþe and Ioie I lete hem dwelle 410

þe froyte of þis matere þat I telle
Whan tyme come men þouȝt it for þe best
That reueH stint and men goñ to her rest 413

The tyme come þis olde Sawdenesse
Ordeyned haþ þis feest of which I told
And to þe fest cristen folk hem dresse
In general boþ ȝenge and old 417
Here may men feest and rialte bihold
And deyntes moo þan I can ȝou devise
But al to dere þei bouȝt it er þei rise 420

O sodeyn woo þat euer art successoure [*Latin note*, p. 133.] 182
To worldly blisse sp[r]ayned is wiþ bitternesse
þe end of þe ioye of our worldely laboure
Woo occupieþ þe fyne of our gladnesse 424
Herk þis counsaille for þi sikernesse
Vppon þi glade day haue in þi mynde
þe vnwar woo or harme þat commeþ behinde 427

For shortely forto tellen at oon word
The Sowden and þe cristen euerechone
Bene al to-hewe and stikked at þe bord
But it were oonly dame custance allone 431
þis olde Sawdenes þis cursed krone
haþ wiþ her frendes done þis cursed dede
ffor she her self wold al þe cuntre lede [leaf 91, back]

NE þer nas Surrien noon þat was conuerted
þat of þe counsaille of þe Sawden wote
þat he nas al to-hewe er he asterted
And Custaunce han þei take anoñ fote hoot 438
And in a shippe al steerless god woote
þei han hure sette and bidden her lerne saile
Out of Surry ageynward to ytaile 441

A certeyn tresour þat' she þider' ladde
And soþe to seyn vitaile grete plente
They han her ȝeuen and cloþes eke she hadde
And fforþ she sailleþ in þe salt' see 445
O my custaunce ful of benygnyte
O Emperours ȝonge douȝtere dere
He þat' is lord of fortune be þi stere 448

She blesseþ and wiþ ful pitous voys
Vnto þe Crois of crist' þus seid she
O cleer o. welful autere holy croys
Rede of þe lambes blood ful of pite 452
That' wessh̄ þe world' from þe olde iniquyte
Me from þe feende and from his clawes kepe
þat' day þat' I shal drenche in þe depe 455

Victorious tree protection̄ of trewe
That' oonly worþi were for to bere
The king' of heuene wiþ his woundys newe
The white lombe þat' hirte was with̄ a spere 459
fflemer of feendes out' of hym and here
On which̄ þi lyues feiþfully extenden
Me kepe and ȝeue myght' my lyf tamenden 462

Yeeres and daies fleet' þis Creature
Thorgh̄-out' þe see of Grece vnto þ^e^ strayte
Of Marrok as it' was hir' aventure [leaf 92]
O mony a sory mele nowe may she baite 466
After her deth̄ ful oft may she wayte
Er þat' þe wilde wawes wil her dryve
Vnto þe place þere she shal aryue 469

MEn myghten axen whi she was not' sclayn̄
Eke atte feeste who myght' her body saue
I Answere to þat' demannde agayn̄
Who saued Danyel in þe horrible caue 473

Ther euery wiȝt' saf he maister' or knaue
Was wiþ þe leon frette or a-stert'
No wight' but' god þat' hem bare in his hert' 476

GOd list' to shewe his wonderful myracle
In hir'§ þat' shee shulde seen his myȝty werkes
Crist' which̄ þat is to euery harme triacle
By certayne meenes oft' / as knowen clerkes 480
Doþ þing' for certeyn ende þat' ful derk es
To mannys witt? þat' for our ignora*u*nce
Ne kon not' knowe his prudent' p*ur*uyaunce 483

Now siþ she was not' at' þe feest' ysclawe
Who kepte her from þe drenching' in þe see
Who kepte Ionas in þe fisshes mawe
Til he was spowted vp at' Nynyve 487
Wel may men knowe it was no wiȝt' but' he
What' kept' puple Ebrayk from drenchinge
Wiþ drie feet' þorgh̄ out' þe see passinge 490

Who bad þe foure spiretes of tempest'
That' power han boþ annoyen londe *and* see
Boþ norþe and souþe *and* also west' *and* Eest'
Annoyeþ neiþer See londe ne tree 494
Soþly þe Comannder' of þat' was he
That' from þe tempest' ay þis wo*m*man kept'
As wel whan she woke as whan she selepte [leaf 92, back]

Where myȝt' þis wo*m*man mete or drynk' haue
Thre ȝere or more how lasteþ hir' vitaille
Who fedde þe Egipcien mary in þe Caue
Or in desert' noon but' Crist' saunz faille 501
V. Mł. folk it' was as grete m*er*vaille
Wiþ loues .v. and fisshes two to fede
God sent' his foysen at' her grete nede 504

She dryueþ forþ into our Occiãn
Thorgh-out oure wilde See to atte last
Vnder an hold þat nempne I ne can
ffor in Nourth humberlond þe wawe hire cast 508
And in þe sonde her shipp stiked so fast
þat þennes wold it not of al a tyde
The wille of Crist was þat she shuld abide 511

The Constable of þe Castel doun is fare
To seen þis werk and al þe ship he souȝt
And fonde þis wery womman ful of care
He fonde also þe tresoure þat she brouȝt 515
In her langage mercy she bysouȝt
The lif out of her body forto twynne
Hire to delyuere of woo þat she was Inne 518

A Maner latyn corrupte was her speche
But algates þer-by was she vnderstonde
The Constable whan he list no lengere seche
This wooful womman brouȝt he to þe londe 522
She kneleþ doune *and* þonkeþ goddys sonde
But what she was she wolde no man seye
ffor foule ne faire þouȝe þat she shuld deye 525

She seide she was so mased in the See
þat she forgate hure mynde by hure trouþe
The Constable of hire haþ so grete pite [leaf 93]
And eke his wiff þat þei wepen for rouþe 529
She was so diligent wiþ-outen slouþe
To serue and plese euerech in þat place
That al her louen þat loken on her face / 532

The Constable and dame Ermengeld his wiff
Were paynymes and þat contray euerywhere
But Hermengilt loued hure riȝt as hir liff
And Constance haþ so longe soiourned þere 536

In Orisons wiþ mony a bitter tere
Til Ihesu haþe conuerted þorgh̄ his grace
Dame hermengild̄ Constablesse of þat place 539

In alł̄ þat' londe durst' none cristen route
Alle Cristen folk' ben fledd̄ fro þat' cuntre
Thorgh̄ paynymes þat' conquered þer aboute
þe plages of þe northh̄ by lond *and* see 543
To wales fledde þe Cristiante
Of olde Bretoynes dwellin in þe Ile
Ther was hure refute for þe mene while 546

But' ȝit' nas neuere cristen Bretoyne so exiled
That' þer nas somme in her priuetee
Honoured Crist' and heþen folk' begyled
And nyȝe þe Castel such̄ þer dwelled thre 550
That' oon of hem was blynde *and* myȝt' not' see
But' it' were wiþ þilk yen of his mynde
With̄ which̄ men seen after þat' þei bene blynd̄ 553

Briȝt' was þe sonne as in þat' somers day
ffor whiche þe constable and his wif also
And Custance han ytake þe riȝt' way
Toward þe see a forlonge way or two 557
To pleien and to romen to *and* froo /
And in her walk' þis blynde man þei mette
Croked and olde wiþ fast' eyen yshett' [leaf 93, back]

In þe name of crist' cried þis blynd Bretoun
Dame hermegild̄ ȝeue me siȝt' agayn
This lady wexe a-fraied of þe soune
Lest' þat' her husbond̄ shortely forto seyne 564
Wold hure for Ihesu cristes loue haue slayn̄
Til Custance made hure bold *and* bad hire wirche
The wille of crist' as douȝter' of his chirche 567

The constable wexe abasshed of þat' sight'
And seide what' amounteþ al þis fare
Custance answerd' Sire it' is cristes myȝt'
þat' helpeþ folk out' of þe fendes snare 571
And so ferforþ she can our lay declare
þat' she þe constable er it was eve
Conuerteþ and on crist' made hym byleue 574

This Constable nas no þing' lord' of þis place
Of which I speke þer he Custaunce fonde
But' kepte it' strongly mony a wynter' space
Vnder Alla king' of all Norþhumberlonde 578
þat' was full wise and worþi of his honde
Ageyne þe scottes as men may wel here
But' turne I wil ageyn to my matere 581

Sathan þat' euere vs waiteþ to begile
Seghe of Custance al hure perfeccioun
And cast' anone howe he myȝt' quyte her while
And made a yonge knyght' þat' dwelt' in þe toun 585
Loue hire so hoot' of foule affeccioun
þat verrely hym þouȝt' he shulde spille
But' he of hire ones myȝt' haue his wille 588

He woweþ hure but' it' availleþ nouȝt'
She wolde do no synne by no weye
And for despite he compased in his þouȝt' [leaf 94
To make hure a shameful deeþ to dye 592
He waiteþ whan þe constable was away
And priuely vpon a nyȝt' he crept'
In hermengildes Chambre while she slept' 595

Wery for-waked in her Orisons
Slepeþ Custance and hermengild' also /
This knyght' þourgh Sathanas temptacioñs
Al softly is to þe bed y-goo 599

And kitte þe þrote of hermengild̄ atwoo ,
And laide þe blody knyf by dame Custa*u*nce
And went̄ his waye þer god ȝeue hy*m* meschau*n*ce 602

Sone after Co*m*meþ þis Constable home agayn̄
And Eke Alla þat̄ kinge was of þat̄ londe
And segh̄ his wiff dispitously slayn̄
ffor whiche ful oft̄ he wepte and wronge his honde 606
And in þe bedde þe blody knyf he fonde
By dame Custau*n*ce allas what̄ my ȝt̄ she say
ffor verry woo her witte was al away 609

So kinge Alla was tolde al þis meschau*n*ce
And eke þe tyme and where and i*n* what wise
þat̄ in a shipp was founden þis Custau*n*ce
As here byforn ȝe han herde devise 613
The kingges hert̄ of pite gan agrise
Whan he seye so benigne a creature
ffalle in dissese and in mysauenture 616

For as þe lombe toward̄ þ^e^ deth is brouȝt̄
So þis Innocent̄ stant̄ to-fore þe kinḡ
þis fals knyȝt̄ þat̄ haþ þis tresoñ wrouȝt̄
Bereþ hure on honde þat̄ she haþ do þis þinḡ 620
But̄ naþelees þer was grete mo*ur*nynḡ
Amonge þe puple and seie þai can not gesse
Tha[t] she had done so grete a wickednesse [leaf 94, back]

For þei han seyn her̄ eu*er*e so *ver*tuous
And louynḡ hermengile riȝt̄ as her liff
Of þis bare witnesse eu*er*ich̄ in þat̄ hous
Saue he þat̄ hermengild̄ slowe w*ith* his knyff 627
This gentile kinge haþ kauȝt̄ a gret̄ motiff
Of þis witnesse and þouȝt̄ he wold̄ enquere
Depper in þis caas trouþe forto lere 630

Allas Custañce þow nast' no champyoñ
Ne fighte Canstowe nat' so wele away
But' he þat' for oure redempcioñ
And bonde Sathan and lyeþ hy*m* þ*er* he lay 634
So be þi strong' Champioñ þis daye
ffor but' C*ri*ste on þe miracle kith̄
Wiþ-owten gilt' þou shalt' be slayn as swiþe 637

She sette her doune on knees and þ*er* she seide
Immortal god þat' sauedest' Susanne
ffro fals blame and þou merciful maide
Marye I mene douȝter to seint' Anne 641
Byforn whoos childe aungels sing' Osanne
If I be giltlees of þis felonye
My socour*e* be for ellis shal I dye 644

Haue ȝe not' sene somtyme a pale face
Among' a prees of him þat' haþ be ladde
Toward' þe deþe where as he gete no grace
And swich̄ a coloure in his face haþ hadde 648
Men myȝt' knowe his face þat' was bistadde
Amonge alle þe faces of þat' route
So stant Custance and lokeþ hir*e* aboute 651

O quenes lyuynge in prosp*er*ite
Duchesses and ȝe ladies euerechone
Haue some rouþe on her adu*er*site [leaf 95]
An Emp*er*ours douȝtere stant' allone 655
She haþ no wiȝt' to whom to make her mone
O blood real þat' stondest' in þis drede
ffer bene þi frendes at' þi grete nede 658

This Alla king' haþ swich̄ compassio*u*n
As Geltile hert' is fulfilled of pite
þat' from his eyen ranne þe water do*u*n
Now hasteli do fecche a boke quod he 662

And if þis knyght' wil swere howe þat she
þis wo*m*man sclowe ȝit' wil we vs avise
Whom þat' we wold' shuld be *our* Iustise 665

A breton booke writen w*ith* eu*au*ngelies
Was fette and þer-on he swore anone
She giltif was in þe mene whiles
An honde him smote vpon þe nekke bone 669
þat' doune he felle at' ones as a stone
And boþe his eyen brast' out' of his face
In siȝt' of euery body in þat place 672

A voys was herde in general audience
And seide þou hast' disslaundered giltelees
þe douȝter of holy church̄ in high̄ presence
Thus hastowe done and ȝit' I mot' hold' my pees 676
Of þis mervaile agast' was al̄ þe prees
As mazed folk' þei stoden eu*e*rechon*e*
ffor drede of wreche sauf Custance alon*e* 679

Grete was þe drede and eke þe repenta*u*nce
Of hem þat' hadden wrong' suspecio*u*n
Vppon þis cely Innocent' Custa*u*nce
And for þis miracle in conclusio*u*n 683
And by Custance Mediacio*u*n
þe kinge and mony anoþer in þ*at* place
Conuerted were þonked be goddis grace [leaf 95, back]

This fals knyght' was sclayn̄ for his vntrouþe
By Iuggement' of Alla hastifly
And ȝit' Custance haþ of his deþ gret' rouþe
And after þis Ih*e*sus of his mercye 690
Made Alla wedden ful solempnely
This holy maiden þat' is so briȝt' *and* shene
And þus haþ crist' made Custance a quene 693

But' who was wooful if I shal not' lye
Of þis wedding' but' donegild' *and* no moo /
The kingges modere ful of Tyrannye
Hire þouȝt' her cursed hert' brast' a two 697
She wold' not' her sone had done so /
Hire þouȝt' a despite þat' he shulde take
So straunge a creature vnto his make 700

ME list' not' of þe Chaf ne of þe stre
Make so longe a tale as of þe corne
What' shuld' I tellen of þe Rialte
Of mariage or which cours goþ byforne 704
Who blowe þ in trompe or in an horne
þ^e^ ffrwte of euery tale is forto seye
þe[i] and drinke. þei daunce singe or pley. 707

Thei gone to bedde as it' was skil *and* riȝt'
ffor þouȝe þat' wives bene ful holy þingges
þei most' take in pacience a nyght'
Such manere necessaries as ben plesingges 711
To folk' þat' han ywedded he*m* w*ith* ringges /
And laye a litel her holynesse aside
As for þe tyme it' may none o*þere* betide 714

On hire he gate a knaue child' anone
And to a bisshope and his Constable eke
He toke his wif to kepe whan he is gone [leaf 96]
to scotlond' ward' his foomen for to seke 718
Nowe faire Custance þat' is so humble *and* meke
So longe is goon wiþ child' til þat' stille
She halt' her chambere abiding' c*ri*stes wille 721

The tyme is come a knaue child she bere
Mauricius atte fontstone þei hy*m* calle
þis Constable doþ forþ come a massagere
And wrote to his kinge þat' cleped was Alle 725

Howe þat' þis blisful tydyngg*es* is byfalle
And oþer tydingges spedeful forto seye
He takeþ þe l*ett*re and forþ he goþ his waye 728

This Massagere to done his au*aun*tage
Vnto þe kingges mode*re* rideþ swiþe
And salweþ hire ful faire in his langage
Madame quod he. ȝe may be glad *and* bliþe 732
And þonkeþ god an hundred þousand siþe
My lady quene haþ child wiþ-outen doute
To Ioie and blisse of al þis regne aboute 735

Lo here þe l*ett*res seled of þis þinge
þat' I mot' bere wiþ al þe hast' I may
If ȝe wil ouȝt' vnto ȝoure sone þe kinge
I am ȝoure seru*aun*te boþ nyȝt' *and* day 739
Dongild answerd not' not' at' þis tyme
But' here al nyȝt' I wil þou take þi rest'
To morowe wil I saye what' me lest' 742

This Massagere dronk' sadly ale *and* wyne
And stollen were his l*ett*res prively
Out' of his boxe whilst' he slepte as a swyn
And counterfeted was ful subtily 746
A noþ*er*e lett*re* wrouȝt' ful synfully
Vnto þe kinge directe of þis mater*e*
ffrom his Constable as ȝe shal after here [leaf 96, back]

The lett*re* spak' þe Quene delyuered was
Of so horrible a fendlich creat*ur*e
That' in þe Castel noon so hardy was
þat' eny while dorst' þ*er*-Inne endure 753
The modere was an Elf by auent*ur*e
Yeome by Charmes or by sorcerye
And euery wight' hateþ her companye 756

WOo was þis kinge whan he þis *lettre* had seyne
But to no wiȝt' he tolde his sorowes sore
But' of his owne hondo he wrote ageyne
Welcome þe sonde of *crist'* for eu*er*moore 760
To me þat' am nowe lered in his lore
Lord welcome be þi lust' and þi plesau*nce*
My lust' is putte al in þine ordyn*au*nce 763

Wepeþ þis child' al be it' foule or feire
And eke my wiff vnto myn home co*m*mynge
Crist' whan him list' may sende me an heire
More a-greable þan þis is to my likinge 767
This letter he celeþ prively wepinge
Whiche to þe massagere was take sone
And forþ he goþ þer nys no more to done 770

O Massagere fulfilled of dronkenesse [*Latin note*, p. 133.] 182
Stronge is þi breeþ þi ly*m*mes flateren ay
And þou by-wreiest' al sikernesse
Thy mynde is lorn þou Iangelest' as a Iaye 774
Thi face is turned in a newe aray
Ther dronkenesse regneþ in ony route
Ther nys no counseH hidde wiþ-out*e* doute 777

O Donegild' I ne haue noon englissh digne
Vnto þi malice and þi tyrannye [1] [[1] *line repeated in MS, with* tirannye, *as the first line of* leaf 97]
And þerfore to þe fende I þe resigne
Lat' hym enditen of þi traterye 781
ffy ma*n*nysshi fy. o nay by god I lie
ffy feendisshi spirit'. for I dar wel telle
Thowe þou here walk' þi spirit' is in helle 784

This massagere co*m*meþ fro þe feende agayn
And at' þe kingges moders court' he liȝt'
And she was of this massagere ful fayn
And plesed him in al *þat* eu*er*e she myȝt' 788

He drank wel his girdel vnder piȝt'
He sclepeþ and he ffronteþ in his gise
Al nyght' to þe sonne gan arise 791

Ofte were his l*ett*res stolle eu*er*ec̄hon*e*
And counterfeted l*ett*res in þat' wise
þe kinge co*m*maundeþ his constable anon*e*
Vp peyn of hongyng' on an high̄ Iwyse 795
That' he ne shulde suffre in no wise
Custance wiþ-Inne his regne forto abide
Thre daies and a quarter of a tyde 798

But' in þe same ship as he hir*e* fonde
Hur*e* and her yonge sone and al her gere
He shulde putte and croude fro þ^e^ londe
And charge hure þat' she neuere eft come þere 802
O my Custañce wel may þi goost' haue fere
And sleping' in þi dreme bene in pen*au*nce
Whan donegil cast' aH̄ hir ordin*au*nce 805

This Massagere on morowe whan he woke
Vnto þe Castel halt' þe next' waye
And to þe Constable he þe l*ett*re toke
And whan þat' he þis pitous l*ett*re saye 809
fful oft he seide allas and walawaye
lord Crist' quod he howe may þis l*ett*re endure [leaf 97, back]
So ful of synne is mony a creature 812

O myȝty god if' þat' it' be þi wille
Siþ þou art' riȝt'ful Iuge how may it' be
þat' þou wilt' suffren Innocentz to spille
And wicked folk regnen in prosp*er*ite 816
O good Custance allas so woo is me
þat' I mote be þi turmento*ur* or deye
On shames deth̄ þer nys noon oþ*er*e waye 819

Wepen boþ ȝonge and olde in al þat' place
Whan þat' þe kinge þis cursed *lett*re sent'
And Custance wiþ a dedly pale face
þe ferþe day toward her ship she went' 823
But' naþelees she takeþ in good entent'
þe wille of Crist' and kneling' in þe stronde
She saide lorde o. welcome be þi sonde 826

He þat' me kept' from þe fals blame
While I was in þe londe amonges ȝou
He kan me kepe from harme *and* eke fro sham
In salt' See al-þouȝe I se not' howe 830
As stronge as euer he was he is riȝt' nowe
In hym trust' I and in his mode*re* dere
þat' is to me my saille and eke my stere 833

Hi*re* litel child lay weping' in her Arme
An kneling' pitously to him she seide
Pees litel sone I wil do þe noon harme
Wiþ þat' her keerchef of her hede she breide 837
And ouer' his smale yen she it' leyde
And in her Arme she lulleþ it' fûl fast'
And in to heuene her yen vp she cast' 840

Modere quod she and maide briȝt' marie
Soþe is þat' þorowe wo*mm*en*n*ys eggement' [leaf 98]
Mankinde was lorn and dampned ay to dye
ffor which þi child was on croys yrent' 844
þi blisful eyen segh al his turment'
þan is þer no comparison bytwene
þi woo and any woo man may sustene 847

Thowe seghe þi sone yslayn bifore þine eyen
And ȝit' now lyueþ my litel child p*ar*fay
Now lady briȝt' to whoom al woful crien
Thowe glory of wo*mm*anhode þou faire may 851

þow hauen of refute briȝt' sterre of day
Rewe on my childꝑ þat' of þi gentilnesse
Rewest' on euery Rwefuꝗ in distresse 854

O litel child allas wat' is þi gilt'
þat' neuer wrouȝtest' synne as ȝit' parde
Why wil þine harde fadere haue þe spilt'
O mercye dere constable q*uod* she 858
As lat' my litel childꝑ dwelle here w*ith* þe
And ȝif þou darst' not' fauour hy*m* for blame
So kisse him onys in his faders name 861

Therwiþ she lokeþ bacwardꝑ to þe lande
And saide fare wel husbondꝑ rewthlees
And vp she rest' and walkeþ do*un* þ^e^ stronde
Towardꝑ þe shippe hi*re* folowe þ al þe prees 865
And euere she preieþ her childꝑ to holdꝑ his pees
And takeþ her leue and w*ith* an holy entent'
She blesseþ hi*re* and into ship she went' 868

Availed was þe ship it' is no drede
Abundantly for hi*re* a longe space
And oþer necessaries þ*at* shulde nede
She had ynowe heryed be goddes g*rac*e 872
ffor wynde and weder almyȝty god p*ur*chase
And bringe hure home I can no better seye [leaf 98, back]
But' in þe See she driveþ forþ her weye 875

[*PART III.*]

Alla þe kynge com*me*þ home sone after' þis
Vnto his Castel of þe which I tolde
And axeþ wher his wif' and his childꝑ is
The Constable gan about' his hert' coldꝑ 879

And pleynly al þe manere he hym told
As ȝe han herde I can telle it no bettere
And shewe þ þe kinge his seele *and* his lettere 882

And seide lord as ȝe commaunded me
Vp peyn of deþe so haue I done certeyne
This massagere tormented was til he
Most be-knowen and tellen plat *and* pleyne 886
ffrom nyght to nyȝt in what place he had leyne
And þus by witte and subtil enqueringe
Ymagened was by whom þis harme can sprynge 889

The honde was knowen þat þe lettere wrote
And al þe venyme of þis cursed dede
But in what wise certeynly I note
þe effecte is þis þat Alla out of drede 893
his modere sclowe þat mony men pleynly rede
That for she tratour was to her legeaunce
Thus endeþ old donegild with meschaunce 896

The Sorowe þat þis Alla nyȝt *and* day
Makeþ for his wif and for his child also
Ther nys no tunge þat it telle may
But now wil I vnto Custance goo 900
That fleteþ in þe See in peyn *and* woo
V. ȝere and more as liked cristes sonde
Er þat her shippe approched vnto londe 903

Vnder an hethen Castell atte last
Of which þe name in my tixt noȝt I fynde [leaf 99]
Custance and eke þe child þe see vp cast
Almyȝty god þat saueþ al man kinde 907
Haue on custaunce and her childe som mynde
þat fallen is in hethen hand eft sone
In poynt to spille as I shal telle ȝou sone 910

Downe fro þe Casteli comþe þere mony a wiȝt
To gawen on þis ship and on custance
But shortely from þe Castel on a nyȝt
The lordes steward god ȝeue hym meschaunce 914
A theef þat had reyned our creaunce
Come into shipp allone and seide he shuld
Her lemman be where so she wold or nold 917

Woo was þis wrecched womman þoo bygone
Her childe cried and she cried pitously
But blisful mary halpe hure riȝt anone
ffor wiþ her strogelinge wel *and* myȝtely 921
þe theef fille ouer bord al sodeynly
And in þe See he dreynt for vengeance
And þus haþ crist vnwemmed kepte custance 924

O foule lust of luxurie lo þine ende [*Latin note*, p. 133.] 182
Not only þat þou fayntest mannys mynde
But verrely þou wilt his body shende
þe ende of þi werk or of þi lustes blynde 928
Is compleynyng how mony one may men fynde
þat nouȝt for werk somtyme but for þentente
To done þis synne bene eiþer slayn or shente 931

How may þis weike womman han þis strength
Hire to defend aȝeinst þis Renegat
O Golyas vnmesurable of length
How myȝt dauid make þe so mat 935
So yonge and of armure so desolat
How durst he loke vpon þi dredful face [leaf 99, back]
Wel may men seen it was but goddes grace 938

Who ȝaf Iudith corage or hardynesse
To scleen hym Olesphernus in his tent
And to delyuere out of wrecchednesse
The puple of god I seye for þis entent 942

That' riȝt' as god spirit' and vigor sent'
To hem and saued hem out' of meschaunce
So sent' he myȝt' and vigor to Custaunce 945

Forþ goþ þe shippe þorowe-out' þe narow mouþe
Of Iubaltar and scepte dryuyng aye
Som tyme west' and somtyme nourþe *and* souþe
And somtyme Este ful mony a wery daye 949
Til Cristes modere blessed be ȝe aye
haþ scapen þorgh̄ her endelees goodnesse
To make an ende of al her hevynesse 952

Now lat' vs stynt' of Custance but' a throwe
And speke we of þe Romayn Emperour
þat' out' of Surry haþ by letters knowe
þe sclaughter of Cristen folk and dishonoure 956
Doon to his douȝter by a fals tratour
I mene þe Cursed wicked Sowdenesse
That' at þe feest' lete scleen boþ more *and* lesse 959

For which̄ þe Emperour haþ sent' anoñ
His Senatour wiþ real ordynaunce
And oþer lordes god wote mony oñ
On Surriens to taken hie vengeaunce 963
They brennen sleen *and* bringgen hem to meschaunce.
fful mony a day but' shortely þis is þende
Homward' to Rome þei shapen hem to wende 966

This senatour repaireþ *with* victorye
To Romeward' saillinge ful Rially [leaf 100]
And mette þe Shippe dryuyng' as seiþ þe storye
In which̄ Custance sitte ful pitously 970
No þing' ne knewe what' she was ne why
She was in such̄ aray. ne she nyl sey
Of her astaat' þough̄ þat' she shulde deye 973

HE bringeþ her to Rome and to his wiff
He ȝaue hur*e* and her ȝonge sone also
And wiþ þe Senatoure she lad her liff
Thus can our lady bringen out' of woo 977
Wooful Custance and mony an o*þer* moo
And longe tyme dwelled she in þat' place
In holy werkes euer as was hir*e* grace 980

The Senato*ur*s wif her Aunte was
But' for al þat' she knewe her neu*er*e þe more
I wil no lenger tarien in þis cas
But' to kinge Alla which̄ I spake of yore 984
þat' for his wiff wepeþ and sigheþ sore
I wil retorne *and* lete I wil Custance
Vnder þe Senatours gouern*au*nce 987

Kynge Alla which̄ *þat'* had his moder*e* sclayn̄
Vpon a day felle in such̄ repentaunce
þat' if I shortely tellen shal *and* playn̄
To Rome he co*m*meþ to resceyuen his penañce 991
And putte him in þe Popes ordinañce
In by and lowe and Ih*es*u crist' bysouȝt'
fforȝeue his wicked werkes þat' he wrouȝt' 994

The fame anon þorowe Room toune is born
How Alla þe king' shal co*m*men in pilg*ri*mage
By herberiours þat' wenten hy*m* biforn
ffor which̄ þe Senatoure as was vsage 998
Rode hym aȝein and mony of his lynage
As wel to shewen his hie magnificence [leaf 100, back]
As to doon eny king' a Reuerence 1001

Grete chere doþ þis noble Senato*ur*
To kinge Alla and he to hym also
Euerech̄ of hem doþ o*þe*re grete hono*ur*
And so byfelle þat' in a day or twoo 1005

This Senatour is to king' Alla goo /
To feest' and shortely if I shal not' ly
Custance sone in his Companye 1008

Somme men wold' seyn atte request' of Custance
This Senatour haþ ladde þis child' to fest'
I may not tellen euery Circumstance
Be as be may þer was he atte leest' 1012
But' soþe is þis þat' at' his moders hest'
Byforn alla duringe þe metes space
The Childe stode loking' in þe kingges face 1015

This Alla kinge haþ of þe child' gret' wonder
And to þe Senatoure he seide anoon
Whoos is þat' faire childe þat' stondeþ ȝonder'
I noot' quod he by god and be seynt' Iohñ 1019
A modere he haþ but' fadere haþ he noñ
þat' I of wote and shortly in a stounde
He told' Alla how þat' þis child' was founde 1022

But' god wote quod þis Senatour also
So vertuous a lyuere in my liff
Ne seghñ I neuere as she ne herd of mo
Of worldly wommen / mayde ne wiff 1026
I dar wel seide she had leuer' a knyff
þorowe-out' her brest' þan bene a womman wicke
þer is no man couþe bringe hire to þat' prikke 1029

Now was þis Childe as like vnto custance
As possible is a creature to be [leaf 101]
This Alla haþ þe face in remembrañce
Of Dame Custance *and* þeron mused he 1033
If þat' þe childes modere were ouȝt' she
þat' is his wif and priuely he siȝt'
And spedde hym fro þe table þat' he myȝt' 1036

Perfay he þouȝt þe fantom is in myn hede
I ouȝt demen of skilful Iuggement
That in þe salt se my wif is dede
And afterward he made his argument 1040
What wote I ȝif þat crist haþ hider sent
My wiff by see as wel as he her sent
To my cuntre from þennes as she was went 1043

And aftere anoon home wiþ þe Senatoure
Goþ alla forto see þis wonder chance
This Senatour doþ Alla grete honoure
And hastifly he sent aftere Custance 1047
But trusteþ wel her lust nouȝt to dance
Whan þat she wist wherfor was þat sonde
Vnneþes on her fete she myȝt stonde 1050

Whan Alla segh̄ his wif faire he her grette
And wepte it was reuþe forto see
ffor atte first loke he on hir sette
He knewe wel verrely þat it was she 1054
And for sorowe as dombe stant as a tre
So was hert shette in her distresse
Whan she remembred his vnkindenesse 1057

Twise she swowneþ in his owne siȝt
He wepte and him excuseþ pitously
Nowe god quod he and his halowes briȝt
So wisly on my soule haue mercy 1061
þat of ȝoure harme as giltelees am I
As is Maurice Mi sone so lik ȝoure face [leaf 101, back]
Ellis þe feend me fecche out of þis place 1064

Longe was þe sobbyng and þe bitter peyne
Er þat her wooful hertes myȝten cese
Grete was þe pite forto here hem pleyne
þorgh̄ whiche pleyntes gan her woo encrees 1068

I prei ȝou alle my labour to relees
I may not tellen her woo vntil to morowe
I am so wery to speke of her sorowe 1071

But fynaly whan þat þe soþe is wist
That Alla giltlees was of her woo
I trowe an C. tymes ben þei kist
And suche a blisse is þer ytwix hem twoo 1075
þat saue þe Ioie þat lesteþ euermoo
þer is non like þat eny creature
Haþ seyne or shal while þe world may dure 1078

Tho preied she her husbond mekely
In relief of her longe pitous pyne
þat he wolde prei hure fadere specialy
þat of his maieste he wold enclyne 1082
To vouche sauf with him som day to dyne
She preied him eke he shulde by no way
vnto her fader no word of hire say 1085

Somme men wold seyn how þat þe childe Maurice
Doþ þis massage vnto þe Emperour
But as I gesse alla was not so nyce
To him þat was of so souereyn honour 1089
As he þat is of cristen folk þe flour
Sent eny childe but it is bette to deme
He went him self and so it may wel seme 1092

This Emperour haþ graunted gentilly
To come to dyner as he hym bysouȝt [leaf 102]
And wel rede I he loked bisily
Vpon þis child and on his douȝter þouȝt 1096
Alla goþ to his Inne and as hym ouȝt
Arraied for þis feest in euery wise
As ferforþ as his conyng may suffice 1099

The morowe come and Alla can hy*m* dresse
And eke his wif þis emp*er*our forto mete
And forþ þei ride in Ioie and in gladnesse
And whan she segh̄ her fadere in þe strete 1103
She liȝt̄ a-doune and falleþ hy*m* to fete
ffadere quod she ȝoure ȝonge childē Custance
Is nowe ful clene out̄ of ȝoure reme*m*brance 1106

I am ȝoure douȝtere Custance q*uo*d she
þat̄ whilom ȝe sent̄ vnto Surray
It̄ am I fadere þat̄ in þe salt see
Was putte allone and dampned forto dye 1110
Good fader now I yow mercye crye
Send me no more vnto noon heþenes
But̄ þonke my lord here of his kindenes 1113

Who can þe pitous Ioye tellen alle
Bitwixe hem þre siþ þei ben þus ymette
But̄ of my tale make an ende I shal
The day goþ fast̄ I wil no lenger lette 1117
This glad folk to dyner þei hem sette
In Ioye and blisse at̄ mete I lat̄ he*m* dwelle
A þousandē foldē wel more þan I can telle 1120

This childē Maurice was siþen Emp*erour*
Made by þe pope and lyued cristenly
To cristes churche he did grete hono*ur*
But̄ I lat̄ al þis story passen by 1124
Of Custance is my tale specialy
In olde romayn Gestes may men fynde [leaf 102, back]
Mawrices lif I bere it̄ not̄ in mynde [*Latin note*, p. 133.] 182

This kinḡ Alla whan he his tyme say
Wiþ Custance his holy wif so swete
To Engelond ben þei come þe riȝt̄ way
Wher as þei lyve in Ioie and in quiete 1131

But litel while it lasteþ I ȝou hete
Ioie of þis world for tyme wil not abide
ffrom day to nyȝt it chaungeþ as þe tyde 1134

Who lyued euere in suche delite a day [*Latin note*, p. 133.] 182
þat ne meued eiþer conscience
Or Ire or talent or somkyn affray
Envie or pride. or passion or offence 1138
I ne seie but for þis ende þis sentence
þat litel while in Ioye or in plesaunce
Lasteþ þe blisse of alla wiþ Custaunce 1141

For deþ þat takeþ of high and lough his rente
Whan passed was a ȝeer euene as I gesse
Out of þis world þis kinge alla he hente
ffor whoom Custance haþ ful grete hevynesse 1145
Now lat vs preien god his saule blisse
And Dame Custance fynally to seye
Toward þe towne of Rome goþ her weye 1148

TO Rome is come þis holy creature
And fyndeþ her frende hool and sound
Now is she scaped alle hure auenture
And whan she her fadere haþ yfounde 1152
Doune on her knees falleþ she to grounde
Weping for tendernesse in hert blithe
She herieþ God an C. thousand siþe 1155

In vertue and holy Almesdede
þei lyuen alle and neuere a sondrie wende [leaf 103]
Til deþ departe hem þis lif þei lede
And fareþ now wel my tale is at an ende 1159
Now Ihesu crist þat of his myȝt may sende
Ioye after woo gouerne vs in his grace
And kepe vs alle þat ben in þis place 1162

¶ **Here endeþ þe tale of þe man of lawe**

[*The Squire's Prologue follows in the MS.*]

And here bygynneþ þe prologe of þe sqwiere [*on leaf* 103]

Oure hoost' vpon his stiropes stood anoñ ¶ þe prologe
And seide good men herkeneþ euerychoñ
This was a þrifty tale for þe nones
Sire parissh preest quod he for goddes bonys 1166
Telle vs a tale as was þi forward yore
I se wele pat' ȝe leerned men in lore
Can moche good by goddes dignyte
þe Parsone hym answered benedicite 1170
What' eileþ þe man so synfully to swere
Oure hoost' answerd' O Iankyn be ȝe þere
I smelle a lollard' in þe wynde quod he
Howe good men quod our hoost' herkneþ me 1174
Abideþ for goddis digne passioñ
ffor we shal haue a predicacioñ
þis lollard' here wil prechen vs somwhat'
Nay by my fader' soule þat shal he nat' 1178
Seide þe Sqwier here shal he nat preche
He shal no gospel glosen here ne teche
He leueþ al in þe grete god he
He wolde sowen som difficulte 1182
Or springeH Cokel in oure clene corn
And þerfore hoost' I warne þe byforn
Mi Ioly body shal a tale telle
And I shal Clynken ȝou so mery a belle 1186
þat' I shal waken al þis companye
But' it' shal not' bene of Philosophie
Ne Phislyas ne teermes queynt' of lawe
þer is but' litel latyn in my mawe 1190

[*The Squire's Tale follows in the MS.*]

¶ The Sqwiers Tale. [*headline*]
[leaf 103, back]

And here bygynneþ þe Sqwiers tale. /

At Sarray in þe land of Tartarye ¶ ffabula Armigeri
þer dwelt a kyng þat werried Russye
þorgh which þer deyed mony a dughty man
þis noble king was cleped Cambynskan 12
Which in his tyme was of so grete renoun
þat þer nas nowhere in no regioun
So Excellent a lord in al þinge
Hym lacked nouȝt þat longed to a kynge 16
As of þe secte of which þat he was born
He kepte his lay to which þat he was sworn
And þerto he was hardy wise *and* riche
And pitous and Iust alway ylich 20
Sooþ of his worde benygne *and* honurable
Of his corage as ony centre stable ¶ centrum circuli
ȝong fresshe and stronge in Armes desirous
As eny bachilere in al his hous 24
A faire persone he was and fortunat
And kept alway so wel rial astat
þat þer nas nawhere such a noþer man
This noble kinge þis tartre Cambynskan 28
had two sones on Eltheta his wiff
Of which þe eldest hight Algarsiff
þat oþer was cleped Camballo
A doughtere had þis worþi kinge also 32
þat ȝongest was and hiȝt Canace
But forto telle ȝou al her beute
It liþe not in my tunge ne in my connynge
I dar not vndertake so hye a þinge 36

Myn engelissh̄ eke is insufficient
It most bene a rytther excellent
þat kouþe his colours longyng for *þat* arte
If he shuld here discryve eny part 40
I am noon suche I most speke as I can
And so byfelle þat þis Cambynskan
Hath xx^ti wyntere born his diademe [leaf 104]
As he was wonte fro ȝere to ȝere I deme 44
He lete þe feest of his natiuite
Done Crien þorgh̄ Sarray his Cite
þe last Idus of March̄ after þe ȝere
Phebus þe sonne ful Iolyf was *and* clere 48
ffor he was nye his exaltacioñ
In Martes face and in his mancioñ
In Aries þe Colerik þe hote signe
fful lusty was þe weder *and* benigne 52
ffor which̄ þe fowles aȝeinst þe son*ne* shene
What for the seson and þe ȝonge grene
fful loude songe hir affeccioñs
Hem semed han geten hem proteccioñs 56
Aȝeinst þe swerd of wynter kene and cold
This Cambynskan of which̄ I haue ȝou told
In Rial vestement sitte vpon his des
Wiþ dia[de]me ful high̄ in his paleys 60
And halt his feest so solempne *and* so riche
þat in þis world ne was *þer* noñ it liche
Of which̄ if I sal telle al þe araye
Than wold it occupie a somers daye 64
And eke it nedeþ nat to devise
And euery cours þe order of her seruise
I wil not telle of her strañge sewes
Ne of her swannes ne her heron-sewes 68
Eke in þat londe as tellen knyȝtes olde
There is som mete þat is for deynte holde
That in þis londe men recche but smal̄
þer nys no man þat may reporten al̄ 72

I wil not' tary ȝou for it is pryme
And for it' is no frute but' losse of tyme
Vnto my furst' I wil haue my recours
And so byfeH þat' after þe þred recours 76
Whil þat' þis kinge sitte þus in his nobleye
Herkenyng' his menstralles her þingges pleye
Byforn him at' þe boord deliciously [leaf 104, back]
Inne atte halle door so sodeynly 80
Ther come a knyght' vpon a stede of bras
And in his honde a brood myr*our* of glas
Vpon his þombe he had of gold' a rynge
And by his side a naked swerd hangynge 84
And vp he rideþ to þe heigh boord'
In al þe halle ne was þer spoke no word'
ffor merveile of þis knyght' hym to biholde
fful bisily þei wayten ȝonge and olde 88
This stronge knyght' þat' come þus sodeynly
Al armed saue his hede ful richely
Salued þe king' þe quene and lordes all*e*
By ordere as þei seten in þe halle 92
Wiþ so high̃ reuerence and obeysance
As wel in speche as in his countenance
þat' Gawayne wiþ his olde curtasie
þouȝe he come ageyn out' of ffarye 96
Ne coude him nouȝt' amend*e* w*ith* no word'
And after þis bifore þe high*e* bord'
He wiþ a manly vois saide his massage
After þe forme vsed in his langage 100
With-out' vice of sillable or of l*et*tre
And for his tale shuld*e* seme þe better*e*
Accordant' to his wordes was his chere
As techeþ arte of speche hem þ*at* it lere 104
Al be it' þat' I can not' sowne his styele
Ne can not' clymben ouer so hiȝe a styele
ȝit' say I þis þat' as to comune entente
Thus moche amounteþ al þat' eu*ere* he ment' 108

If it' so be þat' I haue it' in my mynde
He seide þe kynge of Arabye and of ynde
My liege lord' on þis solempne day
Salweþ ȝou as he best' can *and* may 112
And seendeþ ȝowe in honur' of ȝ*our* feste
By me þat' am redy al at' ȝoure heeste
This stede of bras þat' esily & well [leaf 105]
Can in a space of a day naturel 116
This is to saye in *four and twenti*[1] houres [[1] MS xxiiij.]
Wher so ȝou lust' in drouȝt' or in sho*ur*es
Beren ȝoure body in to euery place
To which ȝoure hertes wilneþ forto pace 120
Wiþ-oute wemme of ȝou þorow foule or fare
Or if ȝow list' to flee as hie in þe Eire
As doþ an Egle whan him list' to sore
This same stede shal bere ȝou euermore 124
Wiþ-outen harme til ȝe be where ȝou list'
þow þat' ȝe sclepen on his bak' or rest'
And turne aȝein wiþ wriþing' of a pynne
He þat' it' wrouȝt' cowde ful mony a gynne 128
He waited mony a constellacioñ
Or he had doo þis operaciōn
And knewe ful mony a seal *and* mony a bonde
This myroure eke þat' I haue in myn honde 132
Haþ suche a myȝt' þat' men may in it see
whan þer shal fallen eny aduersite
Vnto ȝour' regne or vnto ȝ*our* self also
And openly who is ȝoure freend' or ffoo / 136
And ouer al þis if eny lady briȝt'
Haþ sette her hert' in eny man*er* wiȝt'
If he be fals she shal his tresoñ see
His newe loues *and* al his subtilite 140
So openly þat' þer shal no þing' hide
wherfore ageyn þis lusty somers tyde
This myrour and þis ryng' þat' ȝe may see
He haþ sent' to my lady Canacee 144

ȝoure excellent dou3tere þat is here
þe vertue of þis rynge if ȝe wil here
Is þis ! þat if her list it forto were
Vpon her thombe or in her purs it bere 148
þer nys no fowle þat fleeþ vnder þe heuene
þat he ne shal vnderstond his steuene
And knowe his menyng openly *and* pleyne [leaf 105, back]
And answere him in his langage ageyne 152
And euery gras þat groweþ vpon rote
She shal wel knowe *and* whome it wil do bote
And be his woundes neuere so depe *and* wide/
This naked sword þat hongeþ by my side 156
Such vertue haþ þat what man so ȝe smyte
þorowe-out his armure it wil kerue *and* bite
were it as thikke as is a braunched oke
And what man *þat* is wounded *with* þe stroke 160
Shal neu*ere* be hool til þat ȝou list of *grace*
To stroke him *with* þe plat in þilk place
Ther he is hirt þis is as moche to seyñ
ȝe mote *with* þe plat swerde ageyñ 164
Stroke hy*m* in the wounde *and* it wil close
This is a verrey soþe wiþ-outen glose
It failleþ nou3t þe whilis it is in ȝo*ur* holde
And whan þis kny3t haþ þus þis tale tolde 168
He rideþ out of þe halle *and* do*un* he li3t
His stede which þat shoon as son*ne* bri3t
Stant in þe courte stille as eny stoon
This knyght is to his chambre lad anōon 172
And is vnarmed and to þe mete I-sette
þe presentes bene ful richely fette
This is to seyn þe sword and þe Mirro*ur*
And born anoon vnto þe hie toure 176
Wiþ certeyn officers yordeyned þerfore
And vnto Canacee þe ryng is bore
Solempnely þer she sitte atte þe table
But sikerly wiþ-oute eny fable 180

þe hors of bras þat' may not' be remewed
It' stant' as it' were to þe grounde yglwed /
þer may no man out' of þe place it' drive
ffor noon engyn of wyndas or polyve 184
And cause whi for þei can not' þe craft'
And þerfore in þe place þei han it laft'
Tyl þat' þe kny3t' haþ tau3t' hem þe manere [leaf 106]
To voyden him as 3e shal after here 188
Grete was þe prees þat' swarmed to *and* froo
To Gowren on þis hors þat' stondeþ soo /
ffor it' so hegh̄ was . and so brode *and* long'
So wel proporciond forto be stronge 192
Ri3t' as it' were a stede of lumbardye
Ther-wiþ so horsly and so quyke of eye
As it' a ge[n]til poyleis coursere were
ffor Certes from his tale vnto his ere 196
Nature ne art' ne koude hy*m* nou3t' mende
In no degre as al þe puple wende
But' euer-more hir' most' wonder was /
Howe þat' it' cowde gon and was of bras 200
It' was of fayre as þe puple semed
Dyuers folk dyuersly han demed
As mony hedes as mony wittes þ*er* bene
þei Mormured as don a swarme of been 204
And mede skilles after her fantasies
Rehersinge of þe olde poetries ¶ .i. equus pedasdus.
And seide it' was lik' þe Pegasee
þe hors þat' had wenges forto fle 208
Or ellis it' was þe Gr[e]kes hors Synon
That' brou3t' Troy to destructiõn
As men in þise olde Geestes rede
Myne hert' quod oon is eu*er*e more in drede 212
I trowe som*me* men of armes bene þ*er*-Inne
That' shapen hem þis Cite forto wynne
It' were ri3t' good þat' al suchi þing' were knowe
Anoþer rowned to his felawe lowe 216

And seide he lieþ for it is raþer like
An apparence ymade by som̄ magike
As Iogelours pleyen at þise feestes grete
Of sondry þouȝtes þus þei Iangle *and* trete 220
As lewde puple demen comonly
Of þingges þat bene made subtily
Than þei can in her lewdenesse comprehende [leaf 106, back]
þei demen gladly to þe badder ende 224
An som*me* of hem wondren on þe myro*ur*
þat born was vp vnto þe maister tour
How men myȝt in hit suche þingges see
Anoþer answerd *and* seide it myȝt wel be 228
Naturelli by composiciōns
Of Angeles and of seley reflexiōns
And seide þat in rome was such̄ oon
þei speke of Alocen and Vitilion̄ 232
And of Aristote þat writ in her lyues
Of queynt Mirours *and* of p*ro*spectyues
As knowen þei þat han her bokes herde
And oþer folk han wondred on þe swerde 236
þat wold perce þourgh̄ euery þinge
And fille in speche of Thelophus þe kinge
And of Achilles for his queint*e* spere
ffor he kouþe wiþ it boþ hele *and* dere 240
Riȝt in such̄ wise as men may w*ith* þe swerd*e*
Of which̄ riȝt nowe ȝe han ȝoure seluen herde
þe[i] speken of sondry hardyng of Metah̄
And speken of medecynes þer-wiþ-ah̄ 244
And howe *and* whan it shuld harded be
which̄ is vnknowe algate vnto me
¶ Tho speke þei of Ganaces rynge
And seiden ah̄ þat such̄ a wondere þinge 248
Of craft of ryngges had þei neuere non̄
Saue þat he Moyses and kyng Salomon
Had a nane of Conyng in swich̄ arte
Thus seyn þe puple and drawen he*m* a parte 252

But' naþelees som*me* seide þat' it was
wonder to maken of feerne Asshen glas
And ȝit' is glas not' like asshen of feerne
But' for þei han knowen it' so ȝerne 256
Therfore Ceseþ her Iangelinge *and* her wonder'
As sore wo*n*dren some on cause of þondere
On ebbe on flood on gossomer *and* on myst' [leaf 107]
And al þing' to þe cause is wist' 260
Thus Iangelen þei and demen and devise
Til þat' þe kinge can from his bord' arise
Phebus haþ laft' þe angle M*er*edyonal
And ȝit' ascending' was þe beest' Royal 264
þe gentil leon wiþ his Aldrean
Whan þat' þis tartre kinge Cambynskan
Roos from his boord' þer as he satte ful hie
Byforne him goþ þe lowde Mynstraleye 268
Til he come to his Chambre of paramentys
Ther as þei sownen dyuers Instrumentys
That' is like an heuene forto here
Now daunsen lusty venus children dere 272
ffor in þe ffissh̄ hir' lady satte ful hie
And lokeþ on hem wiþ a frendly ye
This noble kinge is sette vpon his trone
þis straunge knyght' is fette to hy*m* ful sone 276
And on the Daunce he goþ wiþ Canace
Here is þe reuel and þe Iolite
þat' is not' able a dulle man to deuyse
He most' han knowe loue and his seruyse 280
And be a feestlich̄ man as fressh̄ as may
That' shulden ȝou deuysen swich̄ array
Who couþe tellen ȝou þe forme of daunces
So vncouþe and such̄ fressh̄ countyn*au*nces / 284
Such̄ Subtile lokingges and dyssymulynges
ffor drede of Ialowsie me*n*nys app*er*ceyuynges
No man but' launcelett' *and* he is dede
þerfor I passe ouer of al þis lustihede 288

I say no more but' in þis Iolynesse
I lete hem to men to soper hem dresse
þe Steward bit' spices forto hie
And eke the wyne in al þis melodye 292
þe vsshers and þe sqwiers ben ygoñ
þe Spices and þe wyne is come anōn
Thei ete and drinke and whan þis had an ende [leaf 107, bk]
Vnto þe temple as reson was þei wende 296
¶ The servise done / þei soupen al by day
whatt' nedeþ ȝou rehersen her array
Eche man wote wel þat' at' a kingges feest'
Haþ plente to þe mest' *and* to þe leest' 300
And deyntees moo þan be in my knowinge
And aftere sopere goþ þis noble kynge
To sene þis hors of bras w*ith* al a route
Of lordes and ladys hym aboute 304
Such wondring' was þer on þis hors of bras
þat' siþen þe grete sege of Troye was
þer as men wondren on an hors also
Ne was þer such a wondering' as was þoo 308
By fynaly þe kinge axeþ þe knyȝt'
þe vertue of þe Coursere *and* þe myȝt'
And preide hym to telle his gou*er*nañce
þe hors anon gan forto trippe and dañce 312
whan þat' þis knyght' leide hond vpon his reyne
And seide Sir' þer is to more to seyne
b*ut* whan þe list to ride owhere
ȝe moot' trille a pynne stonde in his ere 316
which I shal telle ȝou bytwene vs twoo
ȝe mote nempne hym to what' place also
Or to what' euntre þat' ȝou list' to ride ./
And whan ȝe come þere as ȝou list' to abide 320
Bidde hym descende and trille ano*þer*e pynne
ffor þer-Inne lith þeffecte of al þat' gynne
And [he] wol doune descende and don*e* ȝoure wille
And in þat' place he wille abide stille 324

þoughh al the worldt had þe contrary swore
He shal not' þennys by throwe ne ybore
Or if þou list' bidde hym þennes gōōn
Trille þis pynne and he wil vanyssh anōn 328
Out' of þe siȝt' of euery maner wiȝt'
And come aȝein be it' day or nyght'
whan þat' ȝou list' to clepen hym ageyn [leaf 108]
In swich a gise as I shal to ȝou seyn / 332
By-twixen ȝou and me and þat' ful sone
Ride whan ȝou list' þer is no more to done
¶ Enformed whan þe kyng' was of þe knyȝt'
And haþ conceyued in his witt' ariȝt' 336
The manere *and* þe forme of al þis þinge
fful glad and bliþe þe noble douȝty kynge
Repeyring' to his reuel as byforn
þe bridel is into þe toure born 340
And kepte amonge his Iwels leef *and* dere
þe hors vanysshed I note in what' manere
Out' of her siȝt' ȝe gete no more of mee
But' þus I lete in lust' and Iolite 344
This Cambynskan is lordes feestinge
Til wel nygh þe day bygan to springe

¶ **Explicit'. prima pars./**

¶ **The Stag' of an hert'**

The norice of digestion is sclepe
Gan on hem wynke and bad he*m* take kepe 348
þat' moch mete and labour wil haue rest'
And wiþ a galping' mouþe hem albycast'
And seide þat' it' was tyme to lye adoune
ffor blood was in his domynacio*un* 352
Cheresshe þ blood natures frende q*uo*d he
þei ponken hym galping' by two or þre
And euery wight' gan drowen hy*m* to his rest'
As sclepe hem bad þei toke it' for þe best' 356

Her dremes mow not' be tolde for me
fful were her hedes of ffumosite
þat' causet' dreem of whicħ þ*er* is no charge
þei sclepen til it was pryme large 360
þe mos*te* parte but' it' were Canacee
She was ful mesurable as wo*m*men be
ffor of her fadere had she take her leue
To goo to rest' sone after it was Eue 364
Her list' not' appalled forto be [leaf 108, back]
ffor on þe morowe vnfeestlicħ forto see
And sclepte hure first' sclepe and awoke
ffor sucħ a Ioie she in her her*te* toke 368
Boþ of her queynt' rynge and of her myro*ur*
þat' xx^tt^ tyme she chaunged her colo*ur*
And in her sclepe riȝt' for impressioñ
Of her myrour she had a visioñ 372
wherfore er þat' þe sonne vp gan glide
She cleped vpon her maistresse here beside
And seide þat' hir' list' forto arise
þise olde wo*m*men þat' bene gladly wise 376
As is her maistresse answerd' hir' anōn
And seide Madame whidere wold' ȝe gōn
þus erly for folke bene al in rest'
I wil quod she arise for me lest' 380
No lenger slepen but' walken aboute
Her Maistresse clepeþ wo*m*men a grete route
And vp þei risen wel . ten or twelue
Vpriseþ fresh*e* Canace her selue 384
As roddy and briȝt' as þei þe ȝonge sonne
þat' in þe Ram is ten degrees vp ronne
Noon hier was he whan she redy was
And forþ she walked esily a pas 388
Arraied aftere þe lusty seson sote
liȝtly forto prey and walk on fote
Nat' but' .v. or .vj. of her mayne
And in a trenche fer in þe park/ gooþ she 392

The vapour whicħ þat' fro þe erthe glode
Makeþ þe sonne to seme rody *and* brode
But' naþelees it was so faire a siȝt'
þat' it' made aH her hertes forto liȝt' 396
What' for þe seson and þe mowrnynge
And for þe fowles þat' she herde synge
ffor riȝt' anoon she wist what þei ment'
Riȝt' by her songe and knewe al her entent' 400
¶ The knotte whi þat' euery tale is told [leaf 109]
ȝif it' be taried til lust' be cold
Of hem þat' han it' herkened after' ȝore
þe Sauour passeþ euer lenger þe more 404
ffor ffulsomnesse of prolixite
And by þis same reson þenkeþ me
I shuld vnto þe knotte condescende
And maken of her walking' sone an ende 408
¶ Amydde a tree for-drye as white as chalke
As Canacee was plaiyng' in her walke
þer satte a fawcoñ ouer her hede ful hie
þat' wiþ a pitous vois so gan to crie 412
þat' alle in þe wode resed of her crie
And beten had her self so pitously
Wiþ bothe her wenges to þe rede blode
Ranne endelonge þe tre þer as she stode. 416
And euer in oon she cried alway *and* shright'
And wiþ her beke her seluen so she piȝt'
þat' þer ne was Tigre ne cruel beest'
þat' dwelleþ eiþer in wode or in forest' 420
þat' ne wold haue wepte if þat' she wepe couþe
ffor sorowe of hir' she shright' alway so louþe
ffor þer nas neuere ȝit' man on lyue
If þat' I coude a fawcon wel discryve 424
þat' herd of sucħ anoþer of fairnesse
As wel of plu*m*mage as of gentilnesse
Of shappe of al þat' myȝt' rekned be
A ffawcon p*er*egryne þan semed she. 428

Of fremde londe and euermore as she stode
She swowned nowe and nowe for lakke of blood
Til wel nygh is she fallen fro þe tre
This faire kyngges doughter þis Canace 432
þat on her fynger bere þe queynte rynge
þorgh which she vnderstode wel euery þinge
þat eny foule may in his ledne seyne
And coude answere him in his ledne ageyne 436
Haþ vnderstonde þat þis fawcon seide [leaf 109, back]
And wel nygh for þe rouþe almest she deide
And to þe tree she goþ ful hastely
And on þis faucon lokeþ ful pitously 440
And helde her lappe abrood for wel she wist
þe faucon most falle from þe twist
Whan þat it swouned next for lacke of blode
A longe while to waite her she stode 444
Til atte last she spake in þis manere
Vnto þe hawke as ȝe shal after here
¶ What is þe cause if it be forto telle
þat ȝe bene in þis furial peyn of helle 448
Quod Canacee vnto þis hawke aboue
Is þis for sorowe of deth or losse of loue
ffor as I trowe þise bene causes two
þan causen most a gentil hert woo / 452
Of other harme it nedeþ not to speke
ffor þi ȝoure self vpon youre self ȝou wreke
Which þat proueth wel þat eiþere ire or drede
Mote bene encheson of ȝoure cruel dede 456
Siþ þat I see noon oþer wiȝt ȝou chace
ffor loue of god so doþ ȝour self grace
Or what may be ȝoure helpe for west nor este
Ne seghe I neuere er nowe ne brid ne beste 460
þat ferde wiþ him self so pitously
ȝe sclee me wiþ ȝoure sorowe verreyly
I haue of ȝou so grete compassioun
ffor goddes loue come fro þe tree adoun 464

And as I am a kingges douȝthter' trewe
If þat' I verrely þe causes knewe
Of ȝoure dis[e]se if it' lay in my myȝt'
I wold amende it' er þat' it were nyȝt' 468
As wisly helpe me grete god of kinde
And Erbes shal I riȝt' ynow fynde
To hele wiþ ȝoure hirtes hastely
þoo shright' þis fawcon ȝit' more pitously 472
þan euere she did and fille to grounde anōn [leaf 110]
And lith̄ a swowne dede as is þe stoñ
Til Canacee haþ in hure lappe her take
Vnto þat' tyme she gan of swowne awake 476
And after þat' she of swowne gan vpbreide
Riȝt' in hire hawkes leodene þus she seide
¶ þat' pite renneþ sone in gentil herte
ffeling' his symilitude in peynes smerte 480
Is proued alday as men may it see
As wel be werk' as be auctorite
ffor gentil hert' kepeþ gentillesse
I se wele þat' ȝe han on my distresse 484
Compassion my faire Canacee
Of verrey wommanly benignyte
That' nature in ȝoure principles haþ sette
But' for noon hope forto fare þe bette 488
But' forto obeye vnto ȝoure herte free
And forto maken oþer be ware by me
As by þe whelpe chastised is the lyōn
Riȝt' for þat' cause and for þat' conclusioñ 492
While þat' I haue a leisere and a space
Myn harme I wil confessen er I pace
And euere while þat' she her sorowe told'
þat' oþer wepte as she to water wold' 496
Til þat' þe ffaucon bad hir' to be stille
And wiþ a sighe þus she seide hir' tille
Ther I was bredde allas þat' ilk daye
And fostred in a roche of Merbel graye 500

So tenderly þat' no þing' eiled me
I ne wist not' what' was aduersite
Til I coude flee ful hie vndere þe skie
Tho dwelled a tercelet' me fast by 504
þat' semed welle of al gentilnesse
Al were he ful of treson and falsnesse
It' is wrapped vnder humble chere
And vnder' hwe of trouþe & in such manere ./ 508
Vndere plesaunce and vnder bisy peyne [leaf 110, back]
þat' no wight' couþe han wende he coude feyne
So depe in greyne he dyed his coloures /
Riȝt' as a serpent' hyd hym vnder floures 512
Til he may se his tyme forto bite
Riȝt' so þis god of loue ypocrite
Doþ so his serymonijs and obeysances
And kepeþ in semblaunt' al his obseruaunces / 516
That' sowneþe into gentilnesse of loue
As in a tompe is al þe faire aboue
And vnder is þe cours which as ȝe wote
Such was þis ypocrite boþ colde *and* hote 520
And in þis wise he serued his entente
þat' saue þe feende non wist' what' he mente
Til he so longe had wepte *and* compleyned
And many a ȝeer his servise to hym feyned 524
Til þat' myn hert' to pitous *and* to nyce
Al Innocent' of his crowned malice
ffor-ferde of his deþ as þouȝt' me
Vpon his oþes and his Suerte 528
Graunted hym loue vpon þis condicioun
þat' euer moo myn̄ honure and my renoun
Were saued boþ privey and apert'
þis is to seyn þat' after his dissert' 532
I ȝaue hym al myn hert' and my þouȝt'
God woot' and he þat' oþer wise nouȝt'
And toke his hert' in chaunge of myn̄ for ay
But' soþ is seide go siþen mony a day 536

A trewe wight' and a þeef thenkeþ not' oōn
And whan he sawe þe þing' so fer ygoñ
þat' I [had] graunted hy*m* fully my loue
In such̄ a gise as I haue seide aboue 540
An ȝeuen hym my trewe hert' as free
As he swore he ȝaf his hert' to me
Anoñ þis tigre ful of doublenesse
ffil on his knees wiþ so deuoute hu*m*blesse 544
Wiþ hye reuerence and as by his chere [leaf 111]
So like a gentile louere of manere
So rauisshed as it' semed for þe Ioye
þat' neuere Iason ne Paris of Troye 548
Iason certes ne noon o*þere* man
Siþ Lameþ was þat' alþer furst' biganne
To louen two as writen folk' to-forne
Ne neuere siþ þe first' man was borñ 552
Ne coude man by xx^ti^ þousand part'
Countrefete þe sophymes of his arte
Ne were worþi to vnbocle his galoche
þer dowblenesse or faynyng' shuld' approche 556
Ne so couþe þonke a wiȝt' as he did me
His manere was an heuene for to see
Til eny wo*m*man were she neuere his wys
So peynted he and kembeþ at' poynt' devis 560
As wel his wordes as his counten*aun*ce
And I so loued hy*m* for his obeysaunce
And for þe trouþe I demed in his hert'
þat' if so were þat' eny þinge hy*m* smerte 564
Al were it' neuere so lite and I it wist'
Me þouȝt' I felt' deþ at' myn hert*e* twiste
And shortely so ferforþ þis þinge wente
þat' my wille haþ his willes Instrument' 568
þis is to seyne my wille obeied his wille
In al þinge as ferre as reson fille
Kepinge þe boundes of my worship euere
Ne neu*ere* had I þinge so leef ne leuere 572

As hym ⁊ god wote ne neuere shal no moo /
þis last' lenger þan a ȝere or twoo
¶ That' I Suppose of hym no þing' but' good
But' fynaly þus at' the ende it' stood 576
þat' fortune wold' þat' he most' twynne
Out' of þat' place which̄ þat' I was Inne
where me were woo it is no questiõ
I can not' make of it discripcioñ 580
ffor oon þinge dar I telle boldely [leaf 111, back]
I knowe what' is þe peyne of deþ *þer*by ⁊
Such̄ harme I felt' for he no wiȝt' by-leue
So on a day of me he toke his leue 584
So sorowefulli eke þat' I wende *ver*rely
þat' he had feled as moche harme as I
Whan þat' I herde hy*m* speke and segh̄ his hwe
But' naþelees I þouȝt' he was so trewe 588
And eke þat' he repeire shuld agayn/
Wiþ-Inne a litel while soþ to sayñ
And reson wold eke þat' he most' goo
ffor his honoure as oft happeþ soo 592
þat' I made vertue of necessite
And toke it wel siþ þat' it' most be
As I best' myght I hid fro hy*m* my sorowe
And toke hy*m* by þe honde seint' Iohñ to borowe 596
And seide þus loo I am ȝoures all
Beþ swich̄ as I haue be to you *and* shal
what' he answerd' it' nedeþ not reherce
who can seyn bette þa*n* he who can do wors 600
whan he haþ al wel seide þan haþ he done
þerfore bihoueþ hy*m* a ful longe spone
þat shal eten w*ith* a feend þus herd I seye
So at' þe last' he mote forþ his weye 604
And forþ he fleeþ til he come *þer* hy*m* list'
whan it' come hy*m* to p*ur*poos for to rist'
¶ I trowe he had þilk' texte in mynde ¶ Redditui suo sui gula gaudent /
þat' al þinge repeiryng' to his kinge 608

Gladeþ hy*m* self þus seyn men as I gesse
Men louen of propre kinde newfangilnesse
As briddes doon þat' men in cages fede
ffor þeigh̃ þou ny3t' and day take of hy*m* hede 612
And strawe her cage faire and soft as silk
And 3eue hem sugre . hony . brede *and* mylk'
3it' right' anoon as þat' his door is vppe
He wiþ his feete wil spurne do*un* his cuppe 616
And to þe wode he wil and wormes ete [leaf 112]
So newfangle bene þei of her mete
And louen nouelries of p*ro*pre kinde
No gentilnesse of blood may he*m* bynde 620
So ferde þis tercelet' allas þe day
Thowe he were gentiH̃ born fressh̃ and gay
And goodly forto sene . humble *and* free
He segh̃ vpon a tyme a kite fle 624
And sodeynly he loued þis kite soo
That' al his loue is clene fro me goo
And haþ his trowþe falsed in þis wise
Thus haþ þe kite my loue in her seruyse 628
And I am lorn w*ith*-outen remedye
And wiþ þat' worde þis fawcon gan to crie
And swowned eft' in Canaces barme
Grete was þe sorowe for þat' haukes harme 632
That' Canacee and alle her wo*m*men made
Þei nyst' howe þat' þei my3t' þe faucon glade
But' Canace home bereþ her in hir' lappe
And softely in plaasters gan hir wrappe 636
Þer as she w*ith* hire beek had hurt' her selue
Nowe can not' Canace but' herbes delue
Out' of the grounde and maken salues newe
Of herbes precious *and* fyne of hewe 640
To helen wiþ þe hauke from day to ny3t'
She doþ her bysynesse and al her' my3t'
And by hire beddes hede she made a mewe
And keuered it' wiþ veluetes blewe 644

In signe of troupe þat' is in wo*m*men sene
And AH wiþ-oute þe mwee is peinted grene
In whiche were peynted aH þise fals foules
As bene þise tydifs . tercelettes and owles 648
Riȝt' for þe spite were peynted hem biside
Pies on hem forto crie and chide
þus lete I Canace her hauke kepinge
I wil no more as nowe speke of her rynge 652
Til it come eft' to p*ur*poos forto seyn [leaf 112, back]
Howe þat' þis faucon gate her loue ageyñ
Repentaunt' as þe story telleþ vs
By mediacioñ of Camballus 656
þe kyngges sone of which I ȝou tolde
But' hens forþ I wil processe holde
To speken of auentures and of batailles
That' ȝit' was neuere herde so grete m*er*veiles 660
ffirst' wil I telle ȝou of Cambynskan
That' in his tyme mony a Cite wan
And aftere wil I speke of algarsif
How þat' he wan Theodora to his wiff 664
ffor whan ful oft' in grete periH he was
Ne had he bene holpen by þe hors of bras
And aftere wil I speke of Camballo
þat' faught' in listes wiþ þe breþeren two 668
ffor Canace er þat' he myȝt' hir' wynne
And þer I left' wil I ageyn bygynne
.l. sol.
va- Apollo whirleþ vp his chare so hie
cat Til þat' þe god Mercurius hous þe sclie 672
Explicit' secunda p*ar*s :
¶ Here endeþ þe squyers tale

And here [*on leaf* 112, *back*]
bygynneþ þe prologe of þ^e^ m*er*chaunte.

In feiþ Squier þow hast' þe wel yquytte
And gentely I preise wel þi witte
Quod þe merchaunt' consideryng' þi 3ouþe
So felingly þou spekest' sir' I þe alouþe 676
As to my dome þer is non þat' is here
Of Eloquence þat' shal be þi pere
[And if þat þow lyue god 3if þe goode chau*n*ce [Barlow MS 20]
And in vertue sende the Contynau*n*ce] 680
ffor of þi speche I haue gret' deynte
I haue a sone and by þe t*r*inite
I had leuere þan xx^ti^ pounde worþ lond
þoug̃h it' were ri3t' nowe fallen in my hond 684
3e ere a man of such̃ discrecioñ
As þ*at*' 3e beñ fy on possessioñ
But' 3if a man be u*er*tuous w*ith*al
I haue my sone snybbed *and* 3it' shal / 688
ffor he to vertue listeþ not' entende [leaf 113]
But' forto pley atte dys and to dispende
And lese al þat' he haþ is his vsage
And he haþ leuere talke wiþ a page 692
þan to comune wiþ a gentile wi3t'
where he my3t' lerne gentillesse ari3t'
A strawe for 3oure gentilnesse quod our Hoost'
What' Marchaunte p*ar*de Sir' wel þou woost' 696
That' ech̃ of 3ou mote tellen at' þe leest'
A tale or twoo or breken his bihest'
That' knowe I weH quod þe M*er*ch*a*unte c*er*teyñ
I prey 3ou haueþ not' me in disdeyne 700

þouȝe to þis man I speke a word or twoo
Telle on þi tale wiþ-outen wordes moo /
Gladly sir' ooste q*uo*d he I wil obeye
Vnto ȝour wille now herkeneþ what' I seye 704
I wil ȝou not' contrarye in no wise.
As ferre as my wittes wil suffise
I prey to god þat' it' may plesen ȝou
þan woot' I wele þat' it' is good ynowe 708

þus endeþ þe prologe /

And here bygynneþ þe Merchauntes tale. [on leaf 113]

Whilom þer was dwellinge in lumbardy ¶ **The tale.**
A worþi kny3t' þat' born was at' Pavy
In which̄ he lyued in grete prosperite
And sixty 3ere a wyuelees man was he 1248
And folowed ay his bodely delite
On womman þer as was his Appetite
As doon þise fooles þat' bene seculers
And whan þat' he was past' sixty 3eres 1252
Were it' for holynesse or ellis for dotage
I can not' seye but' suche a corage
had þis knyght' to be a wedded man
That' day and nyght he doþ al þat' he can 1256
To aspie where he my3t' wedded be
Preiynge our lord̄ to graunt' hym þat' he /
Might' ones knowe þat' blisful liff [leaf 113, back]
þat' is bytwixe an husbonde *and* his wif 1260
And for to lyuen vnder þat' holy band̄
Wiþ which̄ god furste man to womman band̄
Noon oþer lif seide he is worþ a bene
ffor wedloke is so esi and so clene 1264
That' in þis world̄ it' is a paradys
Thus seiþ þis olde kny3t' þat' was so wis
And certeynly as soþ as god is kinge
To take a wif it' is a glorious þinge 1268
And namely whan a man is olde *and* hoore
þan is a wif þe frute of his tresore
þan shuld̄ he take a 3onge wif and a faire
On which̄ he my3t' engender him an aire 1272

And lede his lif in Ioye and solace
Wher as þe bachilers synggen alas
Whan þei fynde eny aduersite
In loue whicħ þat' is but' childes vanite 1276
And trewly it' sitte wel to be soo
That' bachilers han ofte peyne *and* woo
On brutel grounde þei beelde brutelnesse
þei fynde whan þei wene sikernesse 1280
þei lyue but' as a bridde or a beest'
In liberte and vnder nyce areest'
þer as a wedded man in his astate
Lyueþ his lif blisful and ordynate 1284
Vndere þe ȝok' of mariage ybounde
Wel may his hert' in Ioye and blisse be founde
ffor who can be so buxom as a wif
Who is so trewe and eke so tentiff 1288
To kepe him seke and hole as is his make
ffor wel ne woo she wil not' hy*m* forsake
She nys not' wery hym to loue *and* serue
þouȝe þat' he lye bedrede til he sterue 1292
And ȝit' som*me* clerkes sein þat' it' is not' soo
Of whicħ theofraste is oon of þoo ./
What' foorce þouȝt' Thophrast' lusteþ lye [leaf 114]
Ne take no wif q*uo*d he for husbondrye 1296
As forto spare in household' þi dispence
A trewe seru*au*nte doþ more diligence
Thi good to kepe þan þine owne wif
ffor she wil cleyme half part' al her lif 1300
And ȝif þat þou be seke so god me saue
Thi verrey frendes or a trewe knaue
Wil kepe þe better þan she þat' waiteþ ay
Aftere þi good and haþ do mony a day 1304
And if þou take a wif [1] þat' to þe is vntrewe
fful ofte tyme it' shal þe Rwe [1] [[1--1] ? *spurious*]
This entent' an hundred siþes wors
writeþ þis man þer god his bonys curs 1308

But take no kepe of al such vanyte
Defie Theofrast and herkeneþ me
A wiff is goddys ȝift verreyly
Al oþer manere ȝiftes hardely 1312
As londes. rentes pasture or comune
Or mebles al bene ȝiftes of fortune
þat passen as a shadowe on a wall
But drede it nouȝt pleynly speke I shall 1316
A wiff wil last and in þine hous endure
Wel more þan þe list *per*auenture
Mariegge is a ful grete sacrament
Who haþ no wiff I telle hym shent 1320
He lyueþ helplees and is al desolate
I speke of folk in seculere astate
And herken whi. I seie not þis for nouȝt
þe wo*m*man is for mannes helpe ywrouȝt 1324
þe high*e* god whan he had Adam maked
And seghe him alone bely naked
God of his grete goodnesse seide þan /
Lat vs make an helpe vnto þis man 1328
Like to hym self and þan he made Eue
Here may ȝee see and herby may ȝe preue
þat þe wiff is mannys Comfort [leaf 114, back]
His Paradys terrestre and his disport 1332
So buxom and so vertuous is she
þei mos*te* nedes lyue in vnite
Oo flessh þei bene and two soules as I gesse
Haþ but oon hert in hele and in distresse 1336
A wif a seynt Mary benedicite
How myȝt a man han eny adu*er*site
þat haþ a wiff certes I can not seie
þe blisse þat is ytwixe hem tweye 1340
þer may no tunge tellen or hert þenk
If he be poor she helpeþ him to swynk
She kepeþ his good and waasteþ neuer a dele
Al þat her husbond lust she likeþ wele 1344

She seiþ not' onys nay whan he seith ȝe
Doþ þis seiþ he. al redy sire seiþ she
O blisful ordere of wedloke precious
þou arte so mery and eke so vertuous 1348
And so commended and so appreued eke
þat' euery man þat' halt' him worþ a leke
Vpon his bare knees auȝt' al his lif
Thanken his god þat' him haþ sent' a wif 1352
Oyþer prei to god him for to sende
A wiff to last' vnto his lyues ende
ffor þan his lif is sette in sikernesse
He may not' be desceyued as I gesse 1356
So þat' he worche after his wyues rede
þan may he boldely bere vp his hede
þei bene so trewe and also wys
ffor which if þou wilt' worchen as þ^e wis 1360
Do alway so as wommen wil þe rede
Loo howe þat' Iacob as þise clerkes rede
By good counseil of his modere Rebekke
Boonde þe kyddes skyn about' his nekke 1364
ffor which his faders benyson he wan
Loo Iudith as þe storie telle can
Be wise counsail she goddes puple kepte [leaf 115]
And sclowe hym Olophernes while he sclepte 1368
Lo Abygail by counseille how she
Saued her husbonde Nabal whan þat' he
Shuld haue be sclayne and loke aster alsoo
By good counsaile delyuered out' of woo 1372
þe puple of god and made hym marche
Of assure enchaunced forto be
Ther is no þinge in grete superlatif
As seiþ seneke [above] an humble wif' 1376
Suffre þi wifes tunge as Catoñ bitte
She shal commaunde and þou shalt' suffre it'
And ȝit' she wil obeye of Curtesie
A wif is keper of þine husbondrye 1380

wele may þe seke man by-weile *and* wepe
þer as þer nys no wif þe hous to kepe
I warne þe ȝif wisly þou wirche
Loue wel þi wif as crist loueþ his chirche 1384
If thou louest þi self wel. þou louest þi wif
No man hateþ his flesh̄ but in his lif
He fostreth it and þerfore bid I þe
Cherisshe þi wif or þou shalt neuere the 1388
Husbonde and wif what so men Iape or pleye
Of worldly folk holde þe siker weye
They bene so knytte þer may noon harme betide
And namely vpon þe wives side 1392
ffor which̄ þis Ianuarie of which̄ I tolde
Considered haþ wiþ-in his daies olde
þe lusty lif þe vertuous quiete
þat is in mariage hony swete 1396
And for his frendes on a day he sent
To tellen hem the effecte of his entent
wiþ face sadde his tale he haþ hem told
He saide frendes I am hoor and olde 1400
And almost god wote vpon þe pittes brinke
Vpon my soule somwhat I most þenke
I haue my body folily dispended / [leaf 115, back]
Blessed be god it shal be amended 1404
ffor I wil bene certeyn a wedded man
And þat anon in al þe hast I can
Vnto some maide faire and tender of age
I prey ȝou shapeþ for my mariage 1408
Al sodeynly for I wil not abide
And I wil foonden to aspie on my side
To whoom I may be wedded hastely
But for as moche as ȝe bene more þan I 1412
ȝe shul raþer such̄ a þinge espien
þan I and þer me lust best to alien
But of on þing I warne ȝou my frendes dere
I nyl noon olde wif haue in no manere 1416

She shal not' passe xvj ȝere in fayn
Old fissh̄ and ȝonge flessh̄ þat' wil I haue certayn̄
Bett' is q*uo*d he a p[i]ke þan a pikereH
And bette þan olde beef is þe tender' veeH 1420
I wil no womman of xxx^ti wynter' age
It' is but' bene strawe and grete forage
And eke þise olde wyues god it wote
þei konnen so moche craft' on wades bote 1424
So mochel broke harme whan þat' he*m* lest'
That' wiþ hem shuld' I neuer' lyuen in rest'
ffor sondry scoles makeþ subtile clerkes
Wo*m*man of mony scoles. half a clerk es 1428
But' certeyn a yonge þing' may man gye
Riȝt' as men may warme wax w*ith* handis plye
Wherfore I seie ȝou pleynly in a clause
I nyl non olde wif han riȝt' for þis cause 1432
ffor if so were I had some meschaunce
þat' [I] in hir*e* ne couþe haue no plesaunce
þan shuld' I lede my lif in auenture
And so streite to þe deuel sure 1436
Ne children shuld' I noon vpon hur*e* geten
ȝit' had me leuere þat' houndes had me eten
Than þat' myne Heritage shuld*e* falle [leaf 116]
In straunge honde and þus I telle ȝou aH 1440
I dote not'. I not' þe cause whi
Men shuld wedde and ferthermore wote I
Ther spekeþ mony a man of Mariage
þat' wote no more of it' þan doþ my page 1444
ffor whiche causes men shuld' take a wif'
ȝif he may not' chaast bene his lif
Take him a wif wiþ grete deuocion̄
Bycause of leeful procreacion̄ 1448
Of children to þe honure of god aboue
And nouȝt' only for p*ar*amour ne for loue
And for þei shulden leccherie eschewe
And ȝeelde her dettes while þat' it' is newe 1452

Or for þat' eche man shuld helpe oþere
In meschief as sustere shal to broþere
And lyve in chastite ful heuenly
But' sirs by ȝoure leue þat' am not' I 1456
ffor god byþonke it'. I dar make au*aun*te
I fele my lymmes sterke and suffisa*un*t'
To done al þat' a man bylongeþ to
I wote my self best' what' I may do 1460
þouȝ I be hoor I fare as doþ a tre
þat blosmeth er þe frute ywox[e] be
þat' blossmed tre is neiþer drie ne dede
I fele no where hoor but' on my hede 1464
Myne hert' and my ly*m*mes ben as grene
As lauriel is þorgh̄ þe ȝere to sene
And sythen ȝe han herd' al myn entent'
I prey ȝou to my wille ȝe assent' 1468
Dyuers men dyuersly hy*m* told'
Of Mariage mony ensamples olde
So*m*me blamen it' so*m*me preisen it certayn̄
But' at' þe laste shortely forto sayn̄ 1472
As alday falleþ altercacion̄
Bitwixen frendes in disputacion̄
þer fille a strif ytwix his breþeren two · [leaf 116, back]
Of which þat' oon is cleped placebo./ 1476
Iustinus soþly called was þat' other'
Placebo seide oo I am ȝoure broþere
fful litel nede han ye my lord' so dere
Counseile to aske of ony þat' is here 1480
But' þat' ȝe bene so ful of Sapience
That' ȝou ne likeþ for ȝoure high prudence
To weyue from þe word' of Salomon
This word' seiþ he vnto vs everechon̄ 1484
Wirk' al þing' by counseile þus seide
And þan shalt' þou not' repent' þe
But' þeigh̄ þat' Salomon speke such̄ a word'
Myn owne dere broþer and my lord' 1488

So wisly god bringt my saule at ese and rest
I holde ȝoure owe counseH is þe best
ffor broþer myn take of me þis motif
I haue bene nowe a courte man al my lyf 1492
And god woot þouȝe I vnworþi be
I haue stonden in ful grete degre
Abowen lordes of ful grete astate
ȝit had I neuere wiþ none of hem debate 1496
I neuere hem contraried trewly
I wote wele þat my lord can more þan I.
That he seiþ I holde it forme *and* stable
I seie þe same or ellis þing semblable 1500
A ful grete fool is eny counselour
þat serueþ eny lord of hie honour
þat dar presume or ones þenk it
That his counsaile shuld passe his lordes witte 1504
Nay lordes bene no fooles be my fay
ȝe haue ȝoure self spoken here to day
So high sentence so holy & so wel
That I consent and conferme eu*er*y dele 1508
ȝ*our* wordes al & ȝoure opynyo*un*
By god þer is no man in al þis to*un*.
Ne in Ytaile couþe bet han seide [leaf 117]
Criste holdeþ of þis hy*m* ful wel apaied 1512
And trewly it is an hie corage
Of eny man þat stoupeþ into age
To take a ȝonge wif be my fader kynne
ȝoure hert hongeþ vpon a Ioly pynne 1516
Doþ now in þis matere riȝt as ȝou leste
ffor fynally I holde it for þe best
¶ Iustinus þat ay stille satte *and* herde
Riȝt in þis wise he to placebo ansuerde 1520
Nowe broþer myn be pacient I prey
Siþens þat ȝe han seide herken what I sey
Senek amonges oþer wordes wise
Seiþ þat a man ouȝt hy*m* wel avise 1524

To whom he ȝeueth his land or his cateH
And siþens I ought' avise me riȝt' weH
To whoom I ȝeue my [gode aweye ffrome Me [MS Reg. 17 D 15, *leaf* 110, *back*. *Not in Sloane* 1685, *leaf* 91; *or Reg.* 18 *C ii*, *lf* 94; *but in Addit.* 5140, *lf* 153; *Harl.* 7333's *rymes corrected to* me, avised be, *lf* 70, *col.* 1.]
WeHe more I aughte auysede be 1528
To whome I yeue my] body for alway
I warne you wel it' is no childes play
To taken a wif wiþ-out' avisement
Men most' enquere þis is myn assent' 1532
Whedere she be wis. sobre or dronklewe
Eyþer proude or oþer wise a shrewe
A chidere eiþer a waaster' of þi good
Or riche or poor / or ellis a man is wood' 1536
Al be it' so þat' no man fynde shal
Non in þis world' þat' treteþ hool in aH
Ne man ne beest' such as men con devise
But' naþelees it' aught' ynowe suffise 1540
Wiþ eny wif ȝif so were þat' ȝe hadde
Moo good thewes þan her vices badde
And al þis askeþ leisere to enquere
ffor god wote I haue wepte mony a tere 1544
fful p*ri*uely siþens I had a wif
Preise who so wil a wedded ma*n*nys lif'
Certeyn I fynde in it' but' cost' and care
And obseru*au*nces of al blessed bare./ 1548
And ȝit' god þonk' my neighbours al aboute [leaf 117, back]
A[nd] namely of wo*m*men a grete route
Sein þat I haue þe most' stedefast' wiff'
And eke þe mekest oon þat' bereþ liff 1552
But I woote best wher wrieþ [me] my shoo
ȝe may for me riȝt' as ȝou list' doo
Aviseþ ȝou ȝe bene a man of age
Howe þat' ȝe entren into mariage 1556
And namely wiþ a ȝonge wif *and* a feire
By him þat' made water erþe *and* Eyre
þe ȝongest' man þat' is in al þis route
Is bisy ynouȝe to bringe it' aboute 1560

To haue his wiff allone trestep me
ȝe shullen not' plesen hure ȝeres þre
This is to seyn to done her plesaunce
A wiff axep ful mony an obseru*aun*ce 1564
I prey ȝou þat' ȝe ne be euel apaide
Wel quod þis Ianuar' & hastowe al saide
Strawe for þi senek & for þi prouerbes
I count' not' a panyer ful of herbes 1568
Of scole teermes wiser men þan thou/
As þou hast' herd assentep it' riȝt' nowe
¶ To my p*ur*poos Placebo what' say ȝe
I sey it' is a cursed man q*uo*d he 1572
That' lettep Matrimoyne Sikerly
And wip þat' word' þei risen sodeynly
And bene assented fully þat' he shuld'
Wedded be whan hym list' and where he wold' 1576
Thy fantasie and þi curiousnesse
ffro day to day gan in þi soule inpresse
Of Ianuar' about' his mariage
Mony faire shappe and mony fair*e* visage 1580
Ther passep his hert' nyȝt by nyght'
As who so toke a myrour' polshed bright'
And sette it' in a comune Market' place
þan shuld' he seen mony a figure pace 1584
By his Miroure and in þe same wise [leaf 118]
Can Ianuar' in wip his þouȝt' devise
Of Maidens which þat' dwellen [him] beside
O. He wist' not' where he myȝt' abide 1588
ffor þouȝe þat' oon haue beute in her face
A-noper stant so in þe puples grace
ffor her sadnesse *and* her benignite
þat' of þe puple grettest' vois had she 1592
And so*m*me were riche and hadden badde name
But' na þe lees bytwixe ernest *and* game
He atte last' enpoynted hy*m* in oon
A[nd] lete al oper from his hert*e* gooñ 1596

And chese hire of his owne auctorite
ffor loue is blynde al day and may not' se
And whan þat' he was in þe bedde brouȝt'
He purtreide in his hert' and in his þouȝt' 1600
Her freisshe beaute and her age tendere
Hir' myddel smalle her armes longe and sclendere
Her wise gouern*aun*ce and her gentilnesse
Her wo*m*manly beringe and her sadnesse 1604
And whan þat he to her' was condescended
Hym þouȝt' his chois myȝt' not' be amended
ffor whan þat' he him self concluded had
Hy*m* þouȝt' eche oþer mannys witt' so bad 1608
þat' inpossible it' were to replie
Aȝeinst' his chois þis was his fantasie
His frendes sent' he to at' his instañce
And preieþ him to done hy*m* þat' plesañce 1612
That' hastely þei wolde to hy*m* come
He wold abreggen her labour al *and* some
Hit' nedeþ no more to hem to goo ne ride
He was apointed þer he wold abide 1616
Placebo came and eke his frendes sone
And alþer first' he bad he*m* aH a bone
þat' noon of hem noon argumen*tes* make
Aȝeinst' his p*ur*poos whicH þat' he haþ take. 1620
WhicH p*ur*poos was plesaunt' to god as seide he [lf 118, bk]
And verrey grounde of his prosp*er*ite
He saide þer was a mayden in þe toune
WhicH þat' of bewte haþ grete reno*un* 1624
Al were it' so she were of smal degre
Suffiseth him her ȝouþe and her bewte
WhicH mayde he seide he wold haue to wif
To leden in eese and in holynesse his lif' 1628
And þonkeþ god þat' he myȝt' han hir' aH
þat' no wiȝt' his blisse part' shaH
And preieþ him to labour in þis nede
And shapen þat' he faile not' to spede 1632

ffor þan he seide his spirit' was at' eese
þen is quod he no þing' me may displese
¶ Saue oon þinge prikkeþ in my conscience
þe which I wil reherce in ȝoure presence 1636
I haue quod he herd saie ful ȝore agoo
þer may no man han p*ar*fit' blesses twoo
þis is to saie in erþe and eke in heuene
ffor þei he kepte him from þe synnes seuene 1640
And eke fro euery brannche of thilk tree
ȝit' is þere so p*ar*fit prosp*er*ite
And so grete eese and lust' in mariage
That' euer I am a-gast' nowe in myn age 1644
þat' I shal lede nowe so mery a lif
[So delicat withouten wo or strif [MS Harl. 7335, *leaf* 118, *no gap in Petworth.*]
That y shal han myn heuene in erthe] here
ffor siþens þat' verrey heuene is bouȝt' so dere 1648
Wiþ tribulacioñ and grete pen*au*nce
how shuld I such̃ in such̃ plesaunce
As alle wedded men done wiþ her wives
Come to þe blisse þ*er*e crist' eterne alyue es 1652
This is my drede and ȝe my breþ*er*e tweye
Assoilleþ me þis question I ȝou preye
¶ Iustinus which̃ þat hated his foly
Answerd̃ anon riȝt' in his Iapry 1656
And for he wold̃ his longe tale abregge
He wold*e* noon autorite alegge
But' seide sir' so þere bene noon obstacle [leaf 119]
Oþer þan þis god of his hye myracle 1660
And of his mercy may so for ȝou wirche
That' er ȝe han ȝoure ȝiftes of holy chirch*e*
ȝe may repent' of wedded ma*n*nys lif
In which ȝe seyn is neiþer woo ne strif' 1664
And ellis god forbede but' ȝif he sent'
A wedded man grace hym to repent'
Wel often raþer þan a syngle man /
And þerfor sir' þe best' rede I can 1668

Dispeireþ ȝou nouȝt haueþ in memorie
P*er*auenture she may be ȝour' p*ur*gatorie
She may be goddis mene *and* goddys whippe
Than shal ȝoure soule vp to heuen skippe 1672
Swifter þan doþ an arowe out' of a bowe
I hope to god here aftere ȝe shal knowe
þat' þer nys noon so grete felicite
In mariage ne neu*er*e more shal be 1676
þat ȝou shal lak of ȝour' saluacioñ
So þat' ȝe vse as skille is and resoñ
þe lustes of ȝoure wif attemp*er*ally
And þat' ȝe plese hure not' to amerously 1680
And þat' ȝe kepe ȝou eke fro oþer synne
My tale is done for my witte is þinne
Beþ not agast' her-of my broþer'
But' lat' vs wade from þis mat*er* to an oþ*er*e 1684
þe wif of baþe if ȝe wil vnderstond*e*
Of mariage whic̄h ȝe han on hond*e*
Declaren can ful wel in litel space
ffareþ nowe wel god haue ȝou in his grace 1688
And wiþ þis word' þis Iustyne *and* his broþere
Han take her leue and ec̄h of hem of oþere
ffor whan þei seḡh it' most' nedes be
þei wrouȝten so by wise and sleḡh trete 1692
þat' she þis maide whic̄h þat' Mayus hiȝt'
As hastely as euere þat' she myȝt'
Shal wedded be vnto Ianuarye [leaf 119, back]
I trowe it' were to longe ȝou to tary 1696
If I ȝou tolde of euery scrite or bonde
By whic̄h þat' she was festned in his londe
Eiþer forto herken of her riche aray
But' fynaly yc*om*men is þe day 1700
þat' to þe churche boþ[e] bene þei went'
fforto receyue þe holy sacrament'
fforþ co*mm*eþ þe preest' wiþ stole about' his neke
And bad hir' be ylik' sarra and rebek' 1704

In wisdom and [in] troupe of mariage
And saide his orisons as is his vsage
And crowched hem and bad god shuld he*m* blisse
And made al siker ynoughh̄ w*ith* holynesse 1708
Thus bene þei wedded w*ith* solempnite
And at' þe feeste sitteþ he and she
Wiþ oþer worþi folk' vpon þe dees
Al ful of Ioye and blisse is þe paleys 1712
And ful of instrumentes *and* of vitaile
þe most*e* deyntevous of al Ytaile
Byforn hem of instrumentis whichh̄ soun
þat' Orpheus ne of phebes ampheouñ 1716
Ne maden neuere suche a melody
And at' euery cours came loude mynstralcye
That' neu*er*e Ioab trumped forto here
Neiþ*er* Theodomas ȝit' half so clere 1720
And Thebes whan þe cite was in doute
Bacus þe wyne hem shenkeþ al aboute
And Venus laugheþ on euery wiȝt'
ffor Ianuar' was bycome her knyȝt' 1724
And wolde boþ assaien his corage
In liberte and eke in mariage
And wiþ hure fuyr bronde w*ith* her handh̄ aboute
Daunseth byforne þe bride al aboute 1728
And clenly I dar wel seyn right þis
Emyneus þat god of weddyng' is /
Seghh̄ neuere in his lif' so mery a wedded man [leaf 120]
Holde þou þi pees þou poete Marcean 1732
þat' writest' vs þat' ilk wedding' mery
Of hur*e* Philologi and of' Marcury
And of þe sanges þat' þe muses songe
So smale as eke þi penne *and* eke þi tunge 1736
fforto discryuen of þis mariage
Whan tender ȝouþe haþ wedded stouping' age
þer is suche myrþe þat it' may not' be writte
Assaieþ it ȝoure self þan may ȝe wite 1740

ȝif þat' I lak or noon in þis matere
Mayus þat sitte wiþ so benygne a chere
Hire to biholde it' semed faierye
Queen Estre loked neuere wiþ such̃ an ye 1744
On assure so meke a loke as she
I may ȝou not' avise al her bewte
But' þus moche of her bewte telle I may
þat' she was like þe briȝt' morowe of may 1748
ffulfillede of beaute and of plesaunce
This Ianuar' is rauisshť in a traunce
And at' euery tyme he loked on hir' face
But' in his hert' he gan hir' to manace 1752
þat' he þat' nyȝt' *in* armes wold hir' streyn̄
Harder þan euere Paris did Eleyn̄
But' naþelees ȝit' had he grete pite
þat' ilk*e* nyȝt' offenden her most' he 1756
And þought' alas o tender' creature
Nowe god wold ȝe myȝt' wel endure
Al my corage it' is so sharpe *and* kene
I am agast' ȝe shul it' not' sustene 1760
But' god forbede þat' I did al my myȝt'
Nowe wolde god þat' it' were wexen nyȝt'
And þat' þe nyȝt' wolde lasten eu*ere* moo
I wold þat al þis puple were a-goo 1764
And fynaly he doþ al his laboure
As he best' myȝt' sauyng' his honoure
To hast' hem fro þe mete in subtile wise [leaf 120, back]
The tyme came þat' reson was to rise 1768
And after þat' men daunce *and* drink*e* fast'
And spices al aboute þe hous þei cast'
And ful of ioye and blisse is euery man
AH sauf a squyer þat' hiȝt' damyan. 1772
which̃ carf to-fore þe king' mony day
He was so rauysshed on his lady may
That' for þe verrey peine he was nyȝe wode
Almost' he swalte an swowned *þer* he stode 1776

As she him ladde daunsinge in her hand
So fresshe she was and þerto so likand [*spurious*]
And to his bedde he went hym hastely
No more of him at this tyme speke I. 1780
But here I lete him wepe ynow and pleyñ
Til fresshe may wil rewen on his peyn
¶ O perilous fyre þat in þe bedstrawe bredeþ
O famulere foo þat his seruise bedeþ 1784
O seruaunte traitoure fals [of] holy hewe
Like to þe adder sclegh̃ . & in Basom vntrewe
God shilde vs alle from ȝoure iniquitaunce
O Ianuare dronken in plesaunce 1788
Of Mariage se howe þi damyan
Thyne owne squyer and þi born man
Entendeþ to done þe vilanye
God graunte þe þine harme forto aspie 1792
ffor in þis world nys no wors pestilence
Than homely foo alday in þi presence
Parfourmed haþ þis day his arke dyurne
No lenger may þe body of hym soiourne 1796
þe Orisonte as in þat latitude
Riȝt wiþ his mantel þat is derk and Rude
Gan forto sprede þe mysprey aboute
ffor whicl̃ departed is þe lusty route 1800
ffor Ianuare wiþ ponke on euery side
Hoom to her howses lustely þei ride .
Ther as þei done her þingges as hem lust [leaf 121]
And whan þei segh̃ her tyme to go to rest 1804
Sone aftere þat þis hastif Ianuar
Wol go to bedde he wil no lenger tar
He drinkeþ Ypocras clerre *and* vernage
Of spices hote to encresen his corage 1808
And many a letuare had he ful fyne
Such̃ as þe cursed monk daune Costantyne
Haþ writen in his boke of Coytu
To eten hem al he nas no þing eschwe 1812

And þus to his privey frendes seide he
ffor goddis loue as sone as it' may be
Lette voiden al þis hous in curteys wise sone 1815
Men dronken and þe trauers drowe anōn 1817
The bride was brouȝt' to bedde as stille as eny stoñ 1818
So hasted Ianuar' it most' be dōn [*spurious*]
And whan þe bedde was w*ith* þe preest' yblessed
Out' of þe Chambre haþ euery wiȝt' hy*m* dressed 1820
And Ianuar*e* haþ fast' in armes take
His fresh*e* may his p*ar*adis his make
He lulleth hure he kisseth hur*e* ful oft'
Wiþ þilk*e* bristels of his beerd' vnsoft' 1824
Ylike to þe skyn of hounde fissh̄ sharpe as brere
ffor he was shaue al newe in his manere
He rubbeþ hure vpon her tendere face
And seide þus alace I mote trespace 1828
To ȝou my spouse *and* ȝou gretly offende
Or tyme come þat' I wil doune descende
But' naþelees considereþ þis q*uo*d he
þer nys no werkman what' so euer he be 1832
þat' may boþe worche wel and hastely
þis wil be done at' leisere p*ar*fitely
It' is no force howe longe þat' we pleye
I trowe in wedloke coupled bene we tweye 1836
And blessed by the yokke þ*at'* we bene Inne
ffor in our actys we may do no synne ·/
A man may do no synne wiþ his wiff [leaf 121, back]
Ne hirt' hym self wiþ his owne knyff 1840
Now han we leue to pley vs by þe lawe
Thus labowreþ he til þat' þe day gan dawe
And þan he takeþ a soppe in fyne clerre
And vpriȝt in his bedde þan sitteþ he 1844
And aftere þat' he songe ful loude *and* clere
And kissed his wiff and made wanton chere
He was al coltisshñ and ful of ragerye
And ful of Girgoun as is flecked pie 1848

þe sclak skyn about' his necke shakeþ
While þat' he songe so chaunteþ he *and* crakeþ
But' good woote what' may þouȝt' in her hert'
Whan she him segh̄ vpsitting' in his shert' 1852
In his nyȝt' cappe and wiþ his necke lene
She preiseth nouȝt' his plesinge worþ a bene
Than seide he þus my resting' wil I take
Nowe day is come I may no lenger wake 1856
And doune he leide his hede *and* sclept' til prime
And afterward' whan þat' he segh̄ his tyme
Vp riseþ Ianuare but' fresshe may
Holdeþ her chambre vnto þe ferþe day 1860
As vsage is of wives for þe best'
ffor euery laboure somtyme mot' haue rest'
Oyþer ellis longe may he nouȝt' endure
þis is to saye no lyues creature 1864
Be it' of fissh̄ . or brid of beest' or man
Now wil I speke of woful damyan
þat' languowreþ for loue as ȝe shul here
Therfore I speke to him in þis manere 1868
I say o. sely damyan allas
Answere to þis demaunde as in þis cas
Howe shalt' þou to þi lady fressh[e] May
Telle þi woo she wil alway sey nay 1872
Eke if þowe speke she wil þi woo bywreye
God bene þine helpe I can no better seye
¶ This seke Damyan in Venus fire [leaf 122]
So brenneþ þat' he deyeþ for desire 1876
ffor whiche he putte his lif in auentu*re*
No lenger myȝt' he in þis wise endure
But' p*r*iuely a penner' gan he borowe
And in a letter wrote he al his sorowe 1880
In manere of a compleint' oþ*er* a lay
Vnto þis faire and fressh[e] lady may
And in a purs of selk hong on his shert'
He haþ yputte and yleide it' at' his hert' 1884

þe mone þat' at' none was at' thilk day
þat' Ianuare haþ wedded þat' fresh̄ may
yn two of taure was in þe Cancre gliden
So longe haþ she in her chambere bydeñ 1888
As custumes is vnto þese nobles alle
A bride shal not' eten in þe halle
Til daies foure eiþer thre daies at þe lest'
Ypassed bene þan lat' her goo to þe feest' 1892
þe *ferthe*[1] day complete fro none to none [[1] MS iiij]
whan þat' the highe masse was ydone
In halle sitte þis Ianuare *and* may
As fresshe as is þe briȝte somers day 1896
And so bifelle howe þat' þis good man
Remembreþ hym vpon þis Damian
And seide seint' mary how may þis be
That' Damian entendeþ nouȝt to me 1900
Is he ay seke or howe may þis betide
His squyers which̄ þat' stoden hym beside
Excusinge him bycause of his siknesse
Which̄ þat' letted him to do his bysynesse 1904
None oþer cause myȝt' make hym care
þat' me forþenkeþ quod this Ianuare
He is a gentile squyer' be my trouþe
ȝif þat' he deied it' were harme *and* rouþe 1908
He is as wise discrete and secree.
As eny man I woote of his degre
And þerto manly and eke seruisable [leaf 122, back]
And for to bene a þrifty man riȝt' able 1912
But' after mete as sone as euer I may
I wil my self visite hym and eke may
To done him al þe comfort' þat' I can.
And for þat' worde hym blessed euery man 1916
þat' of his bounte *and* his gentilnesse
He wolde so conforten hym in his siknesse
His squyer for it' was a gentile dede
Dame quod he þis Ianuare take good hede 1920

That' at' aftere mete ȝe wiþ ȝoure wo*m*men alle
Whan ȝe han bene in chambre out' of þis halle
That' alle ȝe goon to se þis damyañ
Doþ him disport' he is a gentile man 1924
And telleþ him þat' I wil hy*m* visite
Haue I no þinge but' rested me a-lite
[And spede ȝou faste ffor I woH abyde [MS Reg. 17 D 15, *leaf* 116; *no gap in Petworth.*]
TyHe þat ye slepe ffaste by my syde] 1928
Now wiþ þat' word he gan to hy*m* calle
A sqwier þat' was a marshal of his halle
And tolde him certeyn þingges what' he wold
þis fresh*e* may haþ streight' her way yhold 1932
Wiþ aH her wo*m*men vnto þis Damyan
Doune by his beddes side satte she þan
Confortinge him as she goodly may
This Damyan whan he his tyme say 1936
In secrete wise his purs and eke his bille
In whiche þat' he writen had al his wille
Haþ putte into her honde wiþ-outen more
saue þat' he sikked wondere sore 1940
And soft'ly to hur*e* riȝt' þus seide he
Mercy and þat' ȝe diskeuere nouȝt' me
ffor I am dede if þat' þis þinge be kidde
þis purs haþe she in her bosom hidde 1944
And went' her way ȝe gete no more of me
But' vnto Ianuare ye*o*mmen is she
And on his beddys side sitte ful soft'
He takeþ hur' an kisseþ hure ful oft' 1948
And leide hy*m* doune to slepe and þat' anōn [leaf 123]
She feyned hure as þoo she most' gōn
Ther as she woote þat' euery wiȝt' mote nede
And whan she of þis bille haþ taken hede 1952
She rent' it' al to cloutes at' þe last'
And in þe p*r*iuee softly she it' cast'
Who stodieth nowe but' feire fresh*e* may
And adoune by Ianuare she lay 1956

þat' sclepte to þe Coughe haþ hym a-waked.
Anon he preide hire to stripe hur' naked.
He wold of hur he seide haue som plesañce
He seide hire cloþes did hym encombrañce 1960
And she obeieþ be he leef or lothñ
But' lest' þat' precious folk' be wiþ me wroþe
How þat' he wrouȝt' I dar to ȝou not' telle
Eiþer whedere þat' he þouȝt' on paradis or on helle 1964
But' I lete hem worche in her wise
Til euensonge ringe *and* þat' þei most arise
were it' be destanye eiþer be auenture
were it' by influence eiþer be nature 1968
Eiþer in constellaciōn þat' in suchñ estate
þe heuene stood þat' tyme fortunate
was forto putte a bille of Venus werkes/
ffor al þing' haþ tyme as seine þise clerkes 1972
To eny womman forto gete her loue
I can not' seie but' þe grete god aboue
That' knoweþ þat' none acte is causelees
He demeþ of aH for I wil holde my pees 1976
But' soþ is þis howe þat' þis fresshe may
Haþ take suchñ impressioñ þat' day
On pite of þis sike Damyan
That' from her hert' she ne drive can 1980
The remembraunce forto done hym eese
Certeine þouȝt' she whom þat' þis þing' displese
I rek not' for here I him assure
To loue him best' of eny creature ·/ 1984
Thoughñ he no more nad þan his shert' [leaf 123, back]
lo pite renneþ sone in gentil hert'
Here may ȝe se howe excellent' fraunchise
In wommen is whan þei narowe hem avise 1988
Somme tyraunt' þer is as bene mony oñ
That' haþ an hert' as hard' as eny stoñ
Whiche wold han lete him sterue in þe place
Wel raþer þan han graunted him þat' grace 1992

And hem reioysen in her cruel pride
And recched nouȝt to bene an homycide
This gentile may fulfilled of al pite
Riȝt so of hure honde a *lettre* made she 1996
In whiche she graunteþ hy*m* of hire *verrey grace*
Ther lackeþ nouȝt only but day *and* space
wher þat she myȝt to his lust suffice
ffor it shal be riȝt as he wil deuise 2000
And whan she seeghe her tyme vpon a day
To visite þis Damyan goþ faire May
And subtily þis lett*er* doune she þrest
Vnder his pilowe rede if him lest 2004
She takeþ him by þe hond and hard hy*m* twist
So secrely þat no wiȝt it wist
And bad him be al hole and forþ she wente
To Ianuare whan þat he for her sente 2008
Vp riseþ Damyan the next*e* morwe
Al passed was his siknesse & his sorowe
He kembeþ him and proyneþ hy*m* *and* pykeþ
He doþ al þat his lady lust and likeþ 2012
And eke to Ianuare he goþ as lowe
As euere did a dogge for þe bowe
He is so plesaunt to euery man
ffor craft is al who þat it can 2016
þat euery wight is fayn to teche hy*m* good
And fully in his lady grace he stood
Thus lete I Damyan aboute his nede
And in my tale forþ I wil procede ·/ 2020
So*m*me Clerkes holden þat ffelicite [leaf 124]
Stant in delite and þerfor he
This noble Ianuare wiþ al his myȝt
In honest wise as longeþ to a knyȝt 2024
Shope him to lyve ful deliciously
His howsing his aray al honestly
To his degree was maked as of kingges
Amonges o*þer*e as of honest þingges 2028

He had a gardyn walled al wiþ stoñ
So faire a gardyne wote I nowhere noon
ffor out' of doute I verrely suppose
þat' he þat' wrote þe romance of þe rose 2032
Ne couþe of hit' þe bewte wel devise
Ne priapus ne myȝt' not' suffice
þoughh he be god of gardynes forto telle
The bewte of þe gardyne and of þe welle 2036
That' stood vndere a laurere alway grene
fful ofte tyme king' Pluto *and* his quene
Preserpyna and al her fairye
Disporten hem and maken melodye 2040
Abouten þat' welle and daunceden as men told'
This noble knyght' þis Ianuare þe olde
Suchh deynte haþ in it' to walken and to pley
þat' he wil suffre no wight' to bere þe key 2044
ssaue he him self' for of þe smal wikett
He bare alway of siluere a clikett'
Wiþ þe whichh whan þat' hy*m* lust vnshette
And whan þat' he wold' pay his wiff his dette 2048
In somer seson þidere wold' he goo
And may his wiff' and no wiȝt' but' þei twoo
And þingges whichh þat' were not' doñ abedde
þei in þe gardyn p*er*fourmed han and spedde 2052
And in þis wise mony a mery day
Lyued þis Ianuare and fresh*e* may
But' worldly Ioye may not' alway endure
To Ianuare ne to no worldely creature 2056
O sodeyn happe . o þou fortune vnstable [leaf 124, back]
ylike to þe scorpion uariable
þat' flaterest' wiþ þine heued whan þ*o*u wilt stinge ?
Thy tale is deþ by þine enuenemyng' 2060
O brutel ioye o swete poyson queynt'
O mystery þat' subtilly canst' peynt'
Thyne ȝiftes vndere þe hwe of stidfastnesse
þat' þou desceyuedest' boþ more and lesse . 2064

Why hast' þou Ianuare þus desceyued.
And haddest' hym for þi ful frende receyued.
And now þou hast' byraft' hy*m* boþ his eyen
ffor sorowe of whiche desireth he to dyen 2068
¶ Allas þe noble Ianuare þat' is so fre
Amydde his lust' and his prosp*er*ite
Is wexen blynde and al sodeynly
His deeþ þerfore desireþ he vtterly 2072
And þer-wiþ-aH þe fuyre of Ielosie
Lest' þat' his wif' shuld' falle in some foly
So brent' in his hert' þat' he wold' fayn
That' som*me* man boþe hur' and hy*m* had slayñ 2076
ffor neuere aftere his deþe ne in his liff'
Ne wolde he þat' she were loue ne wiff'
But' euere lyue as a widowe in cloþes blake
Sool as þe turtel doþ þat' haþ lost' her make 2080
But' at' þe last' after a monþe or tweye
His sorowe gan to swage soþ to seye
ffor whan he wist' it' may noon oþer be
He paciently toke his aduersite 2084
Sauf out' of doute may he not' forgoñ
þat' he nas Ialouse euermore in ooñ
Whicĥ Ialousie was so outrageous
That' neiþer in halle ne in nooñ oþ*er* ĥous / 2088
He nolde suffre hure forto ride ne goo
Ne in noon oþer place neuer þe moo
But' ȝif þat' he [had] ha*n*de on hir' alway
ffor whicĥ ful ofte wepeþ freeche may 2092
Thal loueþ Damyan so benygnely:
That' she mote eiþ*er* dey sodeynly
Or ellis she mote han him at' her list' [leaf 125]
She waiteþ whan [her] hert' wold al to-brest' 2096
Vpon þat' oþer side DAmyan
Bycommen is þe sorowfullest' man/
þat' euer was for neiþere nyȝt' ne day
Ne myght' he speke a word to fresh*e* may 2100

As to his p*ur*poos of no suche matere
But' ȝif' þat' Ianuare most' it' here
þat' had oon honde vpon hir' eu*er*e moo .
And naþelees by writing' to and froo 2104
And priveys signes wist' he what' she ment'
And she knewe of þe sygnes of his entent'
¶ O Ianuare what' myȝt' þe availe
Thowe myȝtest' se as ferre as shippes saile 2108
ffor as good is a blynde desceyued be
As to be disceyued whan a man may see
Loo Arguys whiche þat' had an C. eyen
ffor al þat' eu*er*e he couþe powre ey*þer*e prien 2112
ȝit' was he blent' and god woot' so bene moo /
That' wenen wisly þat' it' nys nat' soo
Passe ouer is an eese & say no more
þis fresshe May of which̄ I speke of ȝore 2116
In warme wexe haþ enprinted þis clikett'
þat' Ianuare bere of þat' smal wikett'
By which̄ vnto his gardyne of[t] he went'
And Damyan þat' knewe her entent' 2120
þe Cliket' countrefeted prively
þer nys no more to say but' hastely
Som*m*e wondere by þis cliket' shal betide
Which̄ ye shal here if' ȝe wil abide 2124
O noble Ovide soþe seist' þou god wote
What' scleȝt' is it' þow it' be longe & hote
þat' he nyl fynde it' out' in som*m*e manere
By Piramus and Tisbe may men lere 2128
þough̄ þei were kepte ful longe streit' ouerall
þei ben acorded rownyng' þorgh̄ a wall
Ther nys no wiȝt' couþe han founde out' such̄ a scleiȝt' [lf 125, bk]
But' nowe to purpoos er þat' daies viij. 2132
were passed er the monþe of Iuyl byfille
That' Ianuare haþ caught' so grete a wille
þorowe eggyng' of his wiff' him forto pley
In his gardyne and no þing' but' þei tweye 2136

þat' in a morwe vnto his may seide he
Rise vp my wif' my loue my lady free
The turtels vois is herd my douve swete
The wynter is goon w*ith* al his reynes wete 2140
Come forþ nowe w*ith* þine eyen colu*m*byne
How feirer bene þi brestes þan bene wyne
The gardyne is enclosed al aboute
Come forþ my white spouse out' of doute 2144
þow hast' me wownded in myn hert' o wiff
No spotte in þe nas in al þi liff
Come forþ and lat' vs take our disport'
I Cheese þe for my wiff and my comfort' 2148
Suche olde loude wordes vsed he
On damyan a signe made shee
That' he shulde goo byforn wiþ his clikett'
This damyan haþ opned þe wikett' 2152
And in he stert' and þat' in such̄ manere
That' no wiȝt' myȝt' it' see ne here
And stille he sitte vnder a bussh̄ anoñ
This Ianuare so blynde as is a stoñ 2156
Wiþ Maius in his honde *and* no wiȝt' moo
Into his fresh*e* gardyne is he goo
And crapte to þe wiket' sodeynly
Now wif q*uo*d he here nys but' þou *and* I 2160
That' arte þe creature þat' I best' loue
ffor by þat' lorde þat' sitte vs al aboue
I had leuere dyen on a knyff
þan ȝe offended dere trewe wiff' 2164
ffor goddes sake þenk' how I þe chees
Nouȝt' for no coueityse doutelees ·/
But' only for þe loue I had to þe [leaf 126]
And þough̄ þat' I be olde and may not' see 2168
Be to me trewe and I wil telle ȝou why
Certes iij. þingges shul ȝe wy*n*nen þ*er*by
ffirst' loue of Crist' and to ȝoure self hono*ur*
And al myne heritage toune *and* toure 2172

I ȝeue it' ȝou makeþ Cher[tr]es as ȝou lest'
This shal be doo to morowe er sonne[1] rest' [[1] *first* sonnesse]
So wisly god my soule bringe in blisse
I prey ȝou in couenant' þat' ȝe me kisse 2176
And þouȝe þat' I be Ialous wite me nouȝt'
ȝe ben so depe enprented in my þouȝt'
That' whan I considere ȝoure bewte
And þerwiþal þe vnlikly elde of me 2180
I may not' certes þouȝe I shulde deie
fforbere to bene out' of ȝour' companye
ffor verrey loue þis is wiþ-oute doute
Now kisse me wiff and lat' vs rome aboute 2184
¶ This freesshe may whan she þise wordes herd
Benignely to Ianuare she answerd
But' first' and formest' she bygan to wepe
I haue quod she a soule to kepe 2188
As wel as she and also myn honoure
And of my wifhedo þilke tendere floure
whiche I haue assured in ȝoure hand
whan þat' þe preest' to ȝou my body band 2192
wherfore I wil answere in þis manere
with þe leue of ȝou my lord so dere
I prey god þat' neuere dawe þat' day
þat' I ne sterue as foule as womman may 2196
If euer I do vnto my kynne þat' shame
Eiþer ellis I enpeire so my name
þat' I be fals And if I do þat' lakke
To stripe me *and* putte me *in* a sakke 2200
And in þe next' ryuere do me drenche
I am a gentil wo*m*man *and* no wenche.
whi speke ȝe þus but' men bene euere vntrewe [leaf 126, back]
And wo*m*men ha repreef of ȝou ay newe 2204
ȝe can noon oþer countynancē I leue
But' speke to vs as vntrest' and in repreue
And wiþ þat' worde she segh̄ wher damyan
Satte in þe busshe and knele he bygan 2208

And wiþ her fynger signes made she
þat' Damyan shuld clymbe vpon a tree
þat charged was wiþ frwte and vp he went'
For verreily he knewe al her entent' 2212
And euery signe þat' she couþe make
wel bette þan Ianuare her owne make
ffor in a *lett*re she had tolde him all
Of þis matere howe he worchen shall 2216
And þus I lat' hym sitte in þe pirry
& Ianuare and Mayus regnyng' ful mery
¶ Briȝt' was þe day *and* blewe þe firmament'
Phebus of gold doune haþ his stremes sent' 2220
To gladen eu*er*y floure wiþ his warmnesse
He was þat' tyme in Gemynys as I gesse
But' litel fro his declinacioñ
Of Canser, Iouis exaltacioñ 2224
And so bifelle þat' in a briȝt' morowtide
þat' in þe Gardyne on þat' ferþer side
Pluto þat' is þe kyng' of ffairye
And mony a lady in his companye 2228
ffolowinge his wiff þe qwene p*ro*serpina
Whiche þat' he rauyssshed out' of proserpina
whilis þat' she gadered floures in a mede
In Claudyan ȝe may þe stories rede 2232
How in his Grisly carte he her fette
This kinge of fairye adoune hy*m* sette
Vpon a benche of Turves fressh *and* grene
And riȝt' anon seide he þus to his quene 2236
My wif' quod he þat' may no wiȝt' say nay
The exp*er*ience proueth it' euery day
The treson which þat' wo*m*man doþ to man [leaf 127]
x^c^ thousand telle I can 2240
Notable of ȝoure vntrouþe *and* britelnesse
O salamon richest' of alle rychesse
ffulfilled of sapience and of worldely glorie
fful worþi bene þi wordes to memorie 2244

To euery wightꝑ þatꝑ witte and resoñ can/
Thus preiseþ he ȝitꝑ þe bounte of man
Amongꝑ a Mꝑ men ȝitꝑ fonde I oñ
Butꝑ of alle wo*m*men fonde I neuere nooñ 2248
Thus seiþ þis knyghtꝑ þatꝑ knoweþ ȝoure wickednesse
And Ih*esus* filius C[i]rak as I gesse
Ne spekeþ of ȝou butꝑ seelden reuerence
A wilde fuyr a corrupte pestilence 2252
So falle vpon ȝoure bodies ȝitꝑ to nyȝtꝑ
Ne Se ȝe notꝑ þis honurable knyghtꝑ
By cause alas þatꝑ he is blynde *and* olde
His owne man shal make him kokewoldꝑ 2256
Lo where he sitte þe leccheo*ur* in þe tree
Nowe wil I graunte of my maieste
Vnto þis olde blynde worþi knyȝtꝑ
Thatꝑ he shal han aȝein his eyen siȝtꝑ 2260
whan þatꝑ his wiff wold do him vilanye
þan shal he knowe al her harlotrie
Booþ in repreefꝑ of hure and o*þer* moo/
¶ ȝe Sire quod proserpyne and wil ȝe soo 2264
Nowe by my moders sire soule I swere
þatꝑ I shal ȝeuen hire suffisantꝑ answere
And alle wo*m*men aftere for ȝoure sake
Thatꝑ þouȝe þei bene in eny giltꝑ ytake 2268
Wiþ face bolde þei shullen he*m* self excuse
And beren hem doune þatꝑ wolden he*m* accuse
ffor lacke of answer noon of hem shul dyen
AH hadde ȝe seie a þinge wiþ boþ ȝoure yen 2272
ȝitꝑ shullen we so visage itꝑ hardely
And wepe and swere and chide subtily
þatꝑ ȝe shullen bene as lewde as bene gees [le: f 127, back]
whatꝑ recketh me of suchꝑ autoritees/ 2276
I wote wel þis Iwe this salomon
ffoonde of vs wymmen foles mony oñ
Butꝑ þouȝe þatꝑ he ne fonde no good wo*m*man
þer haþ yfounde mony anoþer man 2280

wo*m*men ful trewe ful good ful vertuous
witnesse of hem þat' dwellen in c*ri*stes hous
wiþ martierdome þei proued her constance
þe Romayn geestes maken remembraunce 2284
Of mony a verrey trewe wif also /
But' sir ne be not' wroþ as be it' soo /
þoughñ þat' he seide he foonde no good wo*m*man
I prei ȝou take þe sentence of þe man 2288
He ment' þus þat' in souereyn bounte
Nis noon but' god but' neiþere he ne she
Eye for verrey god þat' nys but' ooñ
what' make ȝe so moche of Salomoñ 2292
what' þouȝe he made a temple goddys hous
what' þouȝe he were riche and glorious
So made he a temple of fals goddes./
Who myȝt' do a þinge þat' more forbode es 2296
Parde as faire as ȝe his name enplastere
He was a lecchoure and an ydolastre
And in his elde he verrey god forsoke
And ȝif þat' god nad as seiþ þe booke 2300
yspared him for his faders sake he sholde
haue lost' his regne souner þan he wolde
I sette nouȝt' of alle þe vyleynye
þat' ȝe of wo*m*men write a botterflie 2304
I am a wo*m*man nede mote I speke
Eiþer ellis swelle to myñ hert' breke
ffor siþen he seide þat' we bene Iangler[ess]es
As euer mote I brouke boþ my tresses 2308
I shal not' spare for no curtesye
To speke him harme þat' wold' vs vilanye
Dame quod þis Pluto be no lenger wroþe [leaf 128]
I ȝeue it' vp but' siþe*n*s I swore myn' oþe 2312
þat' I wolde graunten him his siȝt' aȝeyñ
My word' shal stonde þat' warne I þe certeyñ
I am a kinge it' sitte me not' to lye
And I quod she a quene of fairye 2316

Her Answere she shal haue I vndertake
Lat' vs no moo wordes make
¶ ffor so þ I wil no lenger ȝou cont*r*arie
Now lat' vs turne aȝein to Ianuarye 2320
That' in þis Gardyn wiþ þis faire Maye
Syngeþ wel merier þan þe popeniay
ȝou loue I best' and shal and o*þer* noñ
So longe aboute þe alaies is he goñ 2324
Tiꝗ he was come aȝeinst' þilk' piry
where as þis damyan sitteþ ful mery
On hegꝗ amonge þe fresh*e* leues grene
This fresh*e* May þat' is so briȝt' an shene 2328
Gan forto sigꝗ and seide alas my side
Now sire quod she for ouȝte þat' may bytide
I moost' haue of þe peeres þ*at* I see
Or I mote dye so soore longeþ me 2332
To eten of þe smale peres grene
Helpe for her loue þat' is of heuene quene
I telle ȝou wel a wo*m*man in my plite
May haue to fruete so grete an appetite 2336
þat' she may dyen but' she it haue
Allas quod he þat' I nad here a knaue
That couþe clymbe alas alas quod he
ffor I am blinde ȝe sire no fors quod she 2340
But' wold' ȝe vouchesauf for goddis sake
þe piry in wiþ ȝoure armes forto take
ffor wel I wote þat' ȝe mystrest me
Ellis shuld I clymbe wel ynowe quod she 2344
So I my fote myȝt' sette vpon ȝoure bak'
ffor soþe seide he in me shal be no lak'
Might' I ȝou helpe wiþ myn herte blood [leaf 128, back]
He stoupeþ doune and on his bak' she stood 2348
And cauȝt' hure by a twist' and vp she gooþ
Ladyes I preie ȝou þat' ye be nat' wrooþ
I can not' glose I am a rude man
And sodeynly anoon þis damyan 2352

Gan pullen vp þe smokke and in he þronge
And whan þat' Pluto segh̃ þis grete wronge
To Ianuarie he ȝaue his siȝt' ageyn̄
[And made him se / as wel as evir he myht
And whan he hadde / cauht his syht ageyn̄]
ne was þer neuer man of þinge so feyn̄
But' on his wiff his þouȝt' was euermoo
Vp to þe tree he cast' his eyen twoo / 2360
And segh̃ þat' Damyan his wif' had dressed,
In which̃ manere it' may not' be expressed
But' [ȝif] I wolde speke vncurteysly
And vp he ȝaue a roringe *and* a crye 2364
As doþe þe modere whan þe childe shal dye
oute helpe alas harowe I gan to crye
O stronge lady stoor what' doostowe
And she answereþ sire what' eileth ȝowe 2368
Haue pacience and reson in ȝoure mynde
I haue ȝou hulpen of boþ ȝoure eyen blynde
Vp perile of my soule I shal not' lyen
As me was tauȝte to hele wiþ ȝoure eien 2372
Was no þinge bette forto make ȝou see
Than strogle wiþ a man vpon a tree
God wote I did it' in ful good entent
Stroggel q*uo*d he. ȝe algate in it went' 2376
God ȝeue ȝou boþe a shames deþ to dyen̄
He swyued þe I segh̃ it' wiþ myne eyen̄
And ellis be I honged by þe hals
Than is quod she þe medecyne fals 2380
ffor certeynly if ȝe myȝten see
Ȝe wold not' saye no wordes vnto me
Ȝe han some glymysing' *and* no p*ar*fit siȝt'
I see quod he as wel as eu*ere* I myȝt' 2384
Thonked be god wiþ boþ myn eyen twoo [leaf 129]
And by my trouþe me þought' he did þ^e soo
Ȝe mase mase good sir' quod she
This þonk' I haue for I haue made ȝou see 2388

[Addit. 5140, *leaf* 167, *bk*, *leaf* 168. *In Reg.* 17 *D xv*, *lf* 122, *bk*, *lf* 123; *not in Reg.* 18 *C* 2, *leaf* 104.]

Allas quod she þat euere I was so kinde
Now dame quod he lat al passe out of mynde
Come doune my leef *and* if I haue myssayd
God helpe me so as I am euel apayd 2392
But by my faders soule I wend haue seyn
How þat þis Damyan had by þe leyn
And þat þi smok had leye vpon þi brest
Ȝe sir quod she ȝe may wene as ȝou lest 2396
But sir a man þat wakeþ out of sclepe
He may not sodeynly wel take kepe
Vpon a þinge ne seen it parfitely
To þat he be adawed verrely 2400
Riȝt so a man þat long haþ blynde ybe
Ne may not sodeynly so wel yse
ffirst whan þe siȝt is newe commen ageyn
As he þat haþ a day or tweyen yseyn 2404
Til þat ȝoure siȝt ystabled be a while
Ther may ful mony a siȝt ȝou begile
Beþ ware I preye ȝou for by heuene kinge
fful mony a man weneþ forto se a þinge 2408
And it is al anoþer þan it semeþ
He þat mysconceyueþ mysdemeþ
And wiþ þat word she lepe doun fro þe tre
This Ianuarie who is glad but he 2412
He clippeþ hire and kisseþ hure ful oft
And on hire wombe he strokeþ hure ful soft
And to his Palays home he haþ hire lad
Nowe good men I prey ȝou to be glad 2416
Thus endeþ here my tale of Ianuarie
God blesse vs and his modere seynt Marie 2418

¶ **Here endeþ þe tale of þe marchaunt**

GROUP D. FRAGMENT V.

§ 1. WIFE OF BATH'S PREAMBLE.

PETWORTH MS.

And here bygynneþ þe prologe of þe wif of Bathe [leaf 129]

Experience thouȝe noon autorite [leaf 129, back]
were in þis world riȝt ynouȝe for me
To speke of woo þat is in mariage
ffor lordingges siþ I twelue ȝere was of age 4
Thonked be god þat is eterne alyue
Husbondes atte church door haue I had fyve
ȝif I so often myȝt han wedded be
But alle were worþi men in her degre 8
But me was tolde certeyn not longe agon is
That siþen crist ne went neuer but onys
To wedden in þe cane of galile
þat by þilk ensample tauȝte he me 12
That I ne shuld wedded be but onys
Herk eek. loo such a sharpe word for þe nones
Beside a welle Ihesu god *and* man
Spake in repreef of þe Samaritan 16
Thow hast yhad .v. husbondes quod he
And þat ilk man þat nouȝ haþ þe
Is not thyne husbond þus seide he certeyn
What he ment þer-by I can not seyn 20
Wele! But *þat* I aske whi the fift man
Was no*n* husbond to þe Samaritan
How mony myȝt she han in mariage
ȝit herd I neuere telle in myn age 24

vpoñ þis nombre diffinicio*un*
Men may devise and glosen vp *and* do*un*
But' wel I wote exp*re*sse wiþ-oute*n* lye
God bad us forto wexe and multiplie 28
That' ge[n]tile text' can I wel vnderstond
Eke wel I wote he seide myñ husbond ¶ Relinq*ue*t h*omo* p*at*rem & m*at*rem & adherebit vx*ori* sue & c*etera*.
Shuld lete fadere *and* modere *and* take to me
But' of no nombre mencioñ made he 32
Of bygamy or of octogamye
Whi shuld men þan of it' han vilanye
loke here the wise man. kyng Salomon
I trowe he had wyues moo þan ōōñ ¶ Genes*is* ij° q*ua*m-obre*m* 36
Now wold god it' lieful were to me [leaf 130]
To be refresshed half so oft' as he
Whicħ ȝift' of god had he for aħ his wyues
No man haþ suchħ þat in þis world alyue es / 40
God wote þis noble kinge as to my witte
þe furst' ny ȝt' had mony a mery fitte
Wiþ eche of hem so wel was hy*m* alyve
Blessed be god. þat I haue wedded fyve 44
Welcome þe .vi. whan þat' euer he shal
ffor siþ I wil not' kepe me chaast' in aħ
Whan myn husbond is fro þe world ygoñ
So*m*me c*ri*sten man shal wedde me anoñ 48
ffor þan the apostel seiþ þat I am fre
To wedde a goddes half where it likeþ me
He seiþ þat' to be wedded is no synne
Better is to be wedded þan to brenne ¶ Melius est nub*ere* quam vri. //
What' rekkeþ me þoo folk' sey vylanye 53
Of shrewde lameþe and his Bygamye
I woot' wel Ab*ra*ham was an holy man
And Iacob eke as fer as euer I can 56
And eche of hem had wyues moo þa*n* twoo
And mony anoþer holy man also
Where can ȝe say in eny maner age
That' vs god defended mariage 60

By expresse woord' I prei ȝou telleþ me
Or where com*m*aunded he virginite
I wote as wel as ȝe it' is no drede
þe Apostel whan he spekeþ of maydenhede 64
He seide þerof precept' had he noñ
Men may counsaile a wo*m*man to be oñ
But' co*u*nseilling' nys non comaundement'
He putte it' in oure owne Iuggement' 68
ffor had god co*m*maunded maidenhede
þan had he dampned weddyng' wiþ þe dede
And certes ȝif þer were no sede ysowe
Virginite þan wherof shuld' it' growe. 72
Paule durst' not' co*m*maunde at' þe leest' [leaf 130, back]
A þing' of which his maister' ȝaf hy*m* no heest'
þe darte is sette vp for virgynyte
Chace who so may who so renneþ best' lat' se 76
But' þis word is not' take of every wiȝt'
But' þer as god wold ȝeue it' of his myght'
I wote wel þat' þe apostel was a mayde
But' naþelees þoughñ þat' he wrote or seide 80
He wold þat' euery wiȝt' were suchñ as he
All nys but' counsaile to virgynite
And forto be a wif he ȝaf me leue
Of Indulgence so is it' no repreue 84
To wedde me ȝif þat' my make dye
W*ith*-oute excepcioñ of Bygamye
Al were it' good no wo*m*man forto touche
He ment' as his body · or in his couche 88
ffor perile is boþ fire *and* towe to assemble
ȝe knowe what' þis ensample may resemble
þis is al *and* som*m*e he helde virginite
More p*ar*fit' þan wedded in freelte 92
Freelte clepe I not' but' þat' he *and* she
Wolde lede her lif al in chaastite
I g*rau*nte it' wel I haue non envie
þoo Maidenhede preferre bygamye 96

It' likeþ he*m* to be clene in body and goost'.
Of myn estaat' I wil make no boost'
ffor wel ȝe knowe a lord' in his houshold'
Haþ not' euery vessel of gold' 100
So*m*me bene of tree and doū her lord' se*r*uise
God clepeþ folk to him in sondry wise
And eu*er*y haþ of god a p*r*opre ȝift
So*m*me þis som*me* þat' as hy*m* likeþ shift' 104
Virginite ys grete p*er*feccioū
And continence eke wiþ deuociōn
But' c*ri*st' þat' of p*er*feccioū is welle
Bad not' euery wiȝt' he shulde selle 108
Al þat' he had and ȝeue it' to þe poore [leaf 131]
And in suc̄h wise folowe hy*m* *and* his lore
He spake to hem þat' wold lyue p*ar*fitely ¶ M' xlx.[1] Dixit *a*utem Ihesus vade & vende omnia quæ habes & da pauperibus [1 *Matth.* xix. 21]
And lordingges by ȝoure leue þat' am not' I
I wil bystowe þe floure of al myn age
In charite and fruyte of mariage
Telle me also to what' conclusioū
Were membres made of generacioū 116
And of so p*ar*fit' wise and whi ywrouȝt'
Tresteþ riȝt' wel þei were not' made for nouȝt'
Glose who so wil I say boþ vp and do*u*n
þat' þei were made for purgacio*u*n 120
Of vryne and oure boþe þingges smale
were eke to knowe a female from a male
And for noon oþer cause. what' seye ȝe no
þe exp*er*ience woot' þat' it' is so / 124
So þat' þe clerkes ben not' wiþ me wrooþ
I seie þis þat' þei maked be[2] fore both [2 *over a y rubd out.*]
This is to seyne for office *and* for eese
Of engendringe ther we not' god displese 128
whi shuld' men ellis in her bokes sette
þat' man shal ȝelde to his wif his dette
Nowe wherwiþ shuld' he paye his payment'
ȝif þat' he ne vsed his sely inst*r*ument' 132

Than were þei made vpon a creature
To purge vryne and eke for engendrure
But' I seye not' þat' euery wiȝt' is holde
þat' haþ suc̄h harneys as I to ȝou haue tolde 136
To goon and vsen hem in engendrure
þan shuld' men take of chastite no cure
Crist' was a mayde and shapen as a man
And mony a seint' siþ þat' þe world' bygan 140
Ȝit' lyued þei euere in p*ar*fit' chaastite
I nyl envie wiþ no virginite
Lat' hem ete brede of pured whete sede
And lat vs wyues ete Barle brede. 144
And ȝit' wiþ barle brede Mark' telle can [leaf 131, back]
Oure lord Ih*es*u refresshed mony a man
In suc̄h astate as god haþ cleped vs /
I wil p*er*seuere I ne am not' precious 148
In wifhode wil I vse myn Inst*r*ument'
As frely as my maker haþ it' sent'
If I be daungerous god ȝeue me sorowe
Myn husbonde shal it' haue boþ eue *and* morowe 152
Whan þat' him list' come forþ *and* paye his dette
An husbond' I wil han I nyl not' lette
Whic̄h shal be boþ my dett*our* *and* my þral
And han his t*r*ibulacio̅n wiþ-aH 156
Vpon his flessh while þat' I am his wiff
I haue the power during' al my liff
vpon his p*r*opre body and not' he
Riȝt' þus þe apostel told' [it] vnto me 160
And bad oure husbondes forto loue hy*m* weH
Al þis sentence me likeþ euery deH
Vp stert' the p*ar*donere and þat' ano̅n
Now dame quod he by god *and* by seynt' Io̅hn 164
ȝe bene a noble precheour in þis caas
I was about to wedde a wiff alas
What' shuld' I by it' on my flessh̄ so dere
Ȝit' had I leuer wedde non to ȝere 168

¶ Ad cor*inthios* vij°. vir sui corpo*r*is potestatem non ha*b*et. *set* mulier.

Ibyde quod she my tale is not' bygonne
Nay þou shalt' drinken a noþ*er* tonne
Er þat' I goo shal sauour wors þan ale
And whan þat' I haue told' forþ my tale 172
Of t*r*ibulacion in mariage
Of whiche I am expert' in myn age
þis is to seye my silf haþ bene þe whippe
þan maist' þowe chese whider' þou wilt' scippe 176
þilk' tonne þat' I shal abroche
Be war of it' or þou to nye aproche
ffor I shal telle ensamples moo þan ten
who that' wil not' be war by oþ*er*e men./ 180
By hym shul oþer men corrected be [leaf 132]
Thise same wordes writeþ ptholome
Rede in his almagest' and take it' þere
Dame I wold' prey ȝou if ȝo*ur* wille were 184
Seide þis pardonere as ȝe bygan
Telle forþ ȝoure tale spare for no man
And teche vs ȝenge men of ȝoure practyke
Gladly quod she siþ it may ȝou like 188
But' þat' I prey to al þis companye
If þat' I speke after my fantasie
As takeþ nat' a greef of þat' I seye
For myñ entent' is not' but' to pleye 192
¶ Now sirs þan shal I telle ȝou my tale
As euere mote I drink*e* wyne or ale
I shal seie soþ þoo husbondes þat' I hadde
As iij. of hem were good *and* two were badde 196
þe iij. were good men riche *and* olde
Vnneþes myȝten þei þe statute holde
In which̃ þei were bounden vnto me
ȝe wote wele what' I mene of þis p*ar*de 200
As god me helpe I laugh̃ whan I þenke
How pitously a nyȝt' I made he*m* swynke
But' by my faye I tolde of it' no store
þei had me ȝoue her londe *and* her tresore 204

Me neded not' do lenger diligence
To wynne her loue and do hem reuerence
þei loued me so wel by god aboue
þat' I ne told' no deynte of her loue 208
A wise wo*m*man wil bysy hure eu*ere* i*n* oñ
To gete her loue ȝe þer as she haþ noñ
But' siþe I had hem holy in myn hond*e*
And siþ þat' þei hadde ȝoue me al her londe 212
what' shuld I take kepe hem forto plese
But' ȝif it' were my profite & myñ ease
But' sette he*m* so a werk*e* by my faye
þat' mony a nyȝt' þei songen weleaway 216
The bacon was not' fette for he*m* I trowe [leaf 132, back]
þat' som*me* men han in Essex at' donmowe
I gouerned hem so wel after' my lawe
þat' eche of hem ful blisful was *and* fawe 220
To bringe me gay þingges fro þe feire
knyves and ryngges & p*ur*ses wel faire
ffor god it' woot' I chide hem spitously
Now herkeneþ how I bere me p*ro*prely 224
ȝe wise wyues þat' can vnderstond'
þus shuld ȝe speke and bere he*m* wrong' on hond'
ffor half so boldely þer can no man
Swere and lye as wo*m*man can 228
I say not þis by wyues þat' bene wise
But' it' be whan þat' þei he*m* mysavise
A wise wif shal if þat' she can her goode
Bere him an honde þat' þe kowe is wode 232
And take witnesse of hire owne mayde
Of hure assent' but' harkeneþ how I seide
¶ Sir*e* olde keynard' is þis þine aray
whi is my neighbo*ur*es wif' so gay 236
She is hono*ur*ed oueral wher she goþe
I sitte at home I haue no þrifty cloþe
what' dostowe at' myn neighb*ou*rs hous
Is she so faire art' þou so amerous 240

what' roune ȝe wiþ our mayde. benedicite
Sire olde lecchoure lat' þi Iapes be
And if I haue a gossipe or a frende
wiþ-oute gilt' ȝe chide as a fende 244
ȝif þat' I walk' or play vnto his hous
þou commest home as dronken as a mous
An prechest' on þi benche wiþ euel preef'
þou seist' to me it' is a grete meschief 248
To wedde a poor womman for costage
And if þat' she be riche of grete parage
þan seist þou þat it' is a turmentrie
To suffre her pride and her malencolie. 252
And if þat' she be faire þowe verrey knaue [leaf 133]
þowe seist þat' euery holoure wol hure haue
She may no while in chaastite abide
That' is assaied vpon eche side 256
Thowe seist' somme folk' desire vs for richesse
Somme for our shap and some for our fairnesse
And somme for she can eiþer sing' or dañce
Thus seistowe wernard' god ȝeue þe meschañce 260
Somme for hure hondes *and* her armes smale
Thus goþ al to þe deueH by þi tale
Thow seyst men may not' kepe a casteH walle
It' may so longe assailled be oueraH 264
And if þat' she be foule þou saist' þat' she
Coveiteþ euery man þat' she may se
ffor as a spaynel she wil on hym lepe
Til þat' she fynde somme man þat' wil hire chepe 268
Ne noon so grey goos gos þer in the lake
As seist þou þat' wil be wiþ-outen make
And seist' it' is an harde þinge forto welde
A wiȝt' þat' no man wil his þonkes helde 272
Thus seist' þou lorel whan þou goost' to bedde
And þat' no wise man nedeþ forto wedde
And no man þat' entendeþ to þe heuene
with wilde þonder' dynt' and fire leuene 276

Mote þi welked nek' be to-broke
þou seist' þat' dropping' houses and eke smoke
And chidinge wyues maken men to fle
Out' of hir owne house. A benedicite 280
What' eileþ suc̄h an old man forto chide
þou seist' we wyues wil oure vices hide
Til we be fast' *and* þan we wil he*m* schewe
Wele may þis be a prouerbe of a schrewe 284
þou seist' þat' Oxen. assen. hors. *and* houndes
þei ben assaide at' dyuers stoundes
Basyns lauoyrs er þat' men he*m* bye
Spones. stooles. *and* suc̄h husbondrye. 288
And so bene pottes cloþes and o*þer* araies [leaf 133, back]
But' of wo*m*men are maked none assaies
Til þei ben wedded old dotard' shrewe
And seist' howe þen we wit̄h our vices shewe 292
Thowe seist' also þat' it' displeseþ me
But' ȝif þou wilt' preise my bewte
And but' þou poure alway vpon my face
And clepe me faire dame in euery place 296
And but' þou make a feest' on þat' ilk' day
þat' I was born and make fresh̄ *and* gay
And but' þou do to myn norys honoure
And to my chambere w*ith*Inne my bour 300
And to my faders folkes *and* his alyes
Thus seist' þou olde bareH̄ ful of lyes
And ȝit' of oure apprentise Iankyn
ffor his crispe here shynyng' as gold' fyne 304
And for he sqwiers me boþ vp *and* do*u*n
ȝit' hast' þou þouȝt' a fals suspecio*u*n
I wil hym not' þei þou were dede to-morowe
But' telle me þis whi hidest' þou wiþ sorowe 308
þi keyes of þi chest' away fro me
It' is my good as wel as þine p*ar*de
what' wenest' þou make an ydyote of o*ur* dame
Now by þat' lord þat' called is seint' Iame 312

þou shalt not boþ þouȝe þou were woode
Be maister of my body and my goode
þat oon þou shalt forgoen magre þine eiȝen
what helpeþ it of me to quere *and* spien 316
I trowe þoo þou woldest lokke me *in* þi chest
þou shuldest seie wif go where þe lest
Take ȝoure disport I wil leue no talis
I knowe ȝou for a good wiff dame Alys 320
we loue no man þat takeþ kepe ne charge
where þat we go we wil be at *our* large
Of alle men blessed mot he be
þe wise astrologen daun ptholome 324
That seiþ þis prouerbe in his almagest [leaf 134]
Of alle men his wisdom is hiest
þat rekkeþ not who haþ þe world in hond
By þis prouerbe þou shalt wel vnderstond 328
Haue þou ynowe what ther þe rekke *and* care
Howe merely þat oþere folk fare
ffor certes olde dotarde be ȝoure leue
ȝe shul haue queynt right ynowe at eue 332
He is to grete a nygard þat wil warne
A man to liȝt a candel at his lantarne
He shal haue neuere þe lasse liȝt p*ar*de
Haue þou ynowe þe ther not pleyn þe 336
Thou seist also þat ȝif þou make vs gay
w*ith* cloþinge or wiþ precious aray
That it is perile of our chaastie
And ȝit wiþ wordes þou mote enforce me 340
And say þise wordes in þe apostels name
In abite made wiþ chastite and shame
ȝe wo*m*men shuld apparaile ȝou quod he
And not in tressed here and gay perre 344
As perle ne wiþ gold *and* cloþes riche
Aftere þi text ne aftere þi rubriche
I nyl not worche as mochel as a gnatte
Thowe seidest als þat I was like a catte 348

But' who so wolde senge a cattis skyn
þan wold' þe catte wel dwellen in his Inn
And if þe cattes skyn be selyke *and* gay
She nyl not' dwel in hous half a day 352
But' forþ she wil er eny day be dawed
To shewe her skyn and go a cat*er*wawed /
þis to seie if I be gay sir' schrewe
I wil renne out' my burel for to shewe 356
Sir' olde foole what helpeþ þe to spien
þei þowe prey argus wiþ his M†. eyen
To be my warde corps as he can best'
In feiþ he shal not' kepe me but' if me lest' 360
ȝit' couþe I make his beerde so mote I þee [leaf 134, back]
þ*o*u seist' eke þat' þer bene þinges þre
þe which̄ þingges trowblen al þis erþe
And þat' no wiȝt' ne may endure þe ferþe 364
O leue sir' schrewe Ih*es*u short' þi liff
ȝit' prechestowe and seist' an hatful wiff
Yreckned is for oon of þise meschau*n*ees
Ben þere non oþer manere resemblaunses 368
þat' ȝe may likne ȝoure parables too
But' ȝif a cely wif be oon of þoo
þow. liknest wo*m*man*n*ys loue to helle
To barayn londe þer water may not' dwelle 372
Thou liknest' it' also to wilde fire
þe more it' brenneþ þe more it' haþ desire
To consume eny þing' þat' brent' wold be
Thow seist' þat' riȝt' a[s] wormes sheende a tre 376
Riȝt' so a wiff' distroieþ her husbonde
þis knowe þei þat' bene to wyues bonde
¶ Lordingg*es* riȝt' þus as ȝe han hunderstand
Bare I stifly myn olde husbondes on hand 380
That' þus þei seiden in her dronkenesse
And eke þat' þei had suspecioñ of Ialousnesse
On Iankin and on myn neef also
O lord þe peyn I did hem *and* þe woo / 384

fful giltelees by goddis swete pyne
ffor as an hors I couþe boþ bite *and* whyne
I couþe pleyn *and* I was in þe gilt'
Or ellis often tyme I had be spilt' 388
Who so þat' first' to mylle co*m*meth first' grynt'
I pleyned furst' so was our*e* werr*e* stint'
¶ þei were ful glad to excusen he*m* ful blyue
Of þinge of which þei agilt' neuer her lyue 392
Of wenches wold' I beren he*m* on honde
Whan þat' for seke þei myȝt' vnneþ stonde
ȝit' ticled I his hert' for þat' he
wende I had of hym so grete chierte 396
I swore þ*at*' al my walking' by nyȝt' [leaf 135]
Was forto aspie wenches þat' he diȝt'
Vnder þat' colour had I mony a myrþe
ffor al such witte is ȝeuen vs i*n* our birþe 400
Deceyte. weping'. spynnyng' god haþ ȝeue ¶ ffallere. flere. nere
To wo*m*man kindely while þat' þei lyue s atuit deus in muliere
And þus of' on þing' I au*au*nte me
At' þe ende I had þe best' in eche degre 404
By sleiȝt' or force. or by som*m*e maner' þinge
As by contynuel m*ur*mur or gruechinge
Namely abed had þei meschaunce
þer wold' I chide and do he*m* no plesa*u*nce 408
I wolde no lenger in þe bedde abide
ȝif þat' I felt' his arme ouer*e* my side
Til he had made his raunson vnto me
þan wolde I suffre hy*m* doo his nicete 412
And þerfore euery man þis tale I telle
Wiue who so may al are for to selle
W*ith* empty hond men may noñ hauke lure
ffor wynnyng' wold' I al his lust' endure 416
And make me a feyned appetite
And ȝit' in bacon had I neuere delite
That' maked me þat' euer I wold' hy*m* chide
ffor þouȝe þe pope had sitte hy*m* beside 420

I wolde not spare hy*m* at his owne bord
ffor be my troupe I quytte hy*m* worde for word
As helpe me v*er*rey god om*n*ipotent
þow I rizt nowe shuld make my testament 424
I ne owe hy*m* a word þat it nys quytte
I brouzt it so aboute by my witte
þat he must zeue it vp as for þe best
Or ellis had we neuer be in rest 428
ffor þoughh he loked as a lyoñ
zit shuld he faile of his co*n*clusioñ
Than wold I seie nowe goode leef take kepe
Howe mekely lokeþ wilkin our shepe./ 432
Come nere my spouse lat me ba þi cheke [leaf 135, back]
ze shul be al pacient *and* meke
And han a swete spiced conscience
Siþ ze so prechh of Iobes pacience 436
Suffreþ alway siþ ze so wel can preche
And but ze doo certeyn we shul zou teche
þat it is faire to haue a wif in pees
Oon of vs mote bowen doutelees 440
And siþ a man is more resonable
þan wo*m*man is. sir ze moste be suffrable
what eileth zou to grucche þus *and* grone
Is it for ze wold han my queynt alone 444
Wy take it alle lo haue it euery delh
Peter I schrewe zou but ze loue me welh
ffor zif I wolde selle my bele chose
I couþe walk as frechh as eny rose 448
But I wil kepe it for *zour* owne tothh
ze be to blame be god I seie zou sothh
Suchh manere wordes had we on hond
Now wil I speke of my ferþe husbonde 452
¶ Mi ferþe husbonde was a reueloure
þis is to seie he had a paramour
And I was zenge and ful of ragerye
Stiborn and stronge and Ioly as a pie 456

lordꝑ I couþe daunce to an harpe smale
And synge ywis as eny nyȝtingale
whan I hadde dronke a draught' of swete wyn̄
Metelyus þe foule cheerle þo swyn̄ 460
þat' wiþ a staf' byraft' his wif her lif'
ffor she dronk' wyne þouȝe I had ben his wiff
Ne shuld he not' han daunted me fro drinke
And aftere wyne on venus most' I þenke 464
ffor as siker as colde engendreþ haile
A likerous mouþ most' han a lykerous tale
In wo*m*man vinolent' is no defence
þis knowe lecchours by exp*e*rience 468
But' lord c*r*ist' whan þat' it' remembreþ me [leaf 136]
Vpon my ȝouþe and [on] my Iolite
It' ticleþ me aboute myn herte rote
Vnto þis day It' doþ myn herte bote 472
þat' I haue had my worldꝑ as in my tyme
But' age alas þat' al wil enuenyme
Haþ me byraft' my bewte and my pith̄
Lat' it' go fare wel þe deuel goo þerwith̄ 476
The floure is goñ þ*er* nys no more to telle
þe bren as I best' can now mote I selle
But' ȝit' to be riȝt' mery wil I foonde
Now forþe to telle of my ferþe husbonde 480
I seie I had in hert' gret' despite
þat' he of eny oþer had delite
But' he was quytte by god *and* by seynt' Iose
I made hy*m* of þe same wode a crose 484
Nat' of my body in no foule manere
But' certeynly I made folk' such chere
þat' in his owne grece I made hy*m* frye
ffor Anger and for verrey Ialowsie 488
By god in erþe I was his purgatorie
ffor which̄ I hope his saule be in glorie
ffor god it' woote he satte ful oft' and songe
whan þat' his shogh̄ ful bitterly hy*m* wronge 492

ffor þer nas noon sauf god and he þat wist
In mony wise where I hym twist
He deyed whan I come fro Ierusalem
And liþe in a graue vnder þe rode-beem 496
All nys his tombe not so curious
As was þe sepulture of hym darius
which þat appelles wrouȝt subtily
It nys but waast to bury hym preciously 500
Lat hym fare wel god ȝeue his soule rest
He is nowe in his graue *and* in his chest
¶ Nowe of my .v. husbond wil I telle
God lat neuere his soule come in helle 504
And ȝit was he to me þe moost shrewe [leaf 136, back]
þat fele I on my ribbes al by rewe
And euere shal unto myn ending dayo
But in oure bed he was so fresh *and* gayo 508
And þer wiþ al so wel couþe he me glose
whan þat he wold han my bele chose
þat þouȝe he had me bete on euery bon
He couþe wynne ageyn my loue anon 512
I trowe I loued him þe bette for he
Was of his loue daungerous to me
We wommen han if þat I shal not lye
In þis manere a queynte fantasie 516
waite what þinge we may not liȝtly haue
Theraftere wil we crie al day and craue
fforbede vs þinge *and* þat desiren we
Prees on vs fast and þan wil we fle 520
with daungere outer we al oure chaffare
Greet prees atte Market makeþ dere ware
And to grete chepe is yholde atte litel pris
This knoweþ euery womman þat is wise 524
¶ My fift husbonde god his soule blisse
which þat I toke for loue and no riechesse
he some tyme was a clerk of oxenford
And had left scole and went at home to boord 528

wiþ my gossip dwellingᵗ in our toūn
God haue her soule her name was alisoun
She knewe myn hertᵗ and al my priuyte
Better þan oure parissh̄ preestᵗ so motᵗ I the 532
To hure bywried I my counseil aꝗ
ffor had myn husbonde pissed on a walle
Or doon a þinge þatᵗ shuldꝗ have costᵗ his liffᵗ
To hure and to anoþer worþi wiffᵗ 536
And to my nece which̄ I loue weꝗ
I wold han tolde his counseile euerideꝗ
And so I did ful often god itᵗ wote
þatᵗ made his face often rede *and* hote. 540
ffor verrey shame and blamed hym self for he [leaf 137]
had tolde to me so grete a privyte
And so byfelle þatᵗ ones in a lente
So ofte tyme I to my gosype wente 544
ffor euere ȝitᵗ I loued to be gay /
And forto walke in marche Averil and may
ffrom hous to hous to harken sonday tailes/
þatᵗ Iankin clerk *and* my gossip dame alys 548
And I my self into þe feeldes wente
Myn husbonde was atᵗ londoñ al þatᵗ lente
I had þe bettre leisere forto pley
And forto see and eke forto be seye 552
Of lusty folk whatᵗ wistᵗ I wherᵗ my grace
Was shapen forto be or in whatᵗ place
Therfore made I my visitacions
To vigiles and to processioñs 556
To prechingᵗ eke and to þise pilgrimages
To plaies of miracles and of mariages
And wered vpon my gay scarlet gites
Thise wormes ne þise mothes ne þise mytes 560
Vpon my perile frete hem neuer a dele
And woostowe whi for þei were vsed wele
Now wil I tellen forþ whatᵗ happed me
I seie þatᵗ in þe feeldes walked we 564

I'il trewely we had such daliañce
þis clerk' and I þat' of my purviañce
I spake to hym and seide how þat he
ȝif I were widowe shuld wedde me 568
ffor certeynly I seye for no bobañce
þat' I was neuere ȝit' without purveañce
Of mariage ne of oþer þingges eke
I hold' a monnys witte nat worþ a leke 572
þat' haþ but' oon hool forto stirten too
And ȝif þat faile þan is al ydoo /
[I bare hym on hande he hadde enchauntede me [MS Reg. 17 Dxv, *on leaf* 132, *back*]
My dame taught me þat subtylte
And eke I sayde I Mete of' hym all nyght 577
He wolde haue slayne Me As I laye vpright
And all my bedde was ffull of' vereye blode
Butte yette I hope þat ye schull do me gode 580
ffor' blode bitokeneþe golde As me was taught
And all was ffalse I dremede of' hitt' right nought
Butte as I ffollowede Ay My dames lore
Aswelle of' that as of' oþer' þynge more] [MS Reg. *extract stops*]
But' nowe Sir' lat' me se what' shal I seyn
A A. by god I haue my tale ageyn.
whan þat' my ferþ husbond' was on bere [leaf 137, back]
I wepte algates and made sory chere 588
As wyues moten for it' is þe vsage
And with my keercheef keuered my visage
But' for þat' I was purueide of a make
I wepte but' smale *and* þat' I vndertake 592
To church was myn husbond yborn on morowe
wiþ neighbours þat' for hym made sorowe
And Iankyn our clerk' was on of þoo
As helpe me god whan þat' I segh hym goo 596
Aftere þe bere me þouȝt' he had a peire
Of legges and of fete so clene *and* feire
þat' al my hert' I ȝaue vnto his holde
He was I trowe xx^tl wynter' olde 600

And I was xlti ȝif I shal scie soþe
Butt ȝitt I had alway a Coltissh̄ toþe
Gatt toþed I was *and* þatt by-cam me weH
I had þe p*r*inte of seyntt venus seeH 604
As helpe me god I was a lusty oñ
ffaire and riche . ȝonge *and* welbygoñ
And trewly as myn husbond̄ tolde me
I had þe bestt quoniam þatt myȝtt be 608
[ffor sertes I Amd aH veneryend [MS Reg. 17 D xv, *on leaf* 133]
Ind ffelenges And my herte is Mercyend
Venus me yafe My luste my lykerousnesse
And Mars yafe me my sturdye hardynesse] 612
Myn ascendentt was taure *and* mars þ*er*-inne
Allas alas þatt euer loue was synne
I folowed aye myn Inclinacioñ
By vertue of my constellacioñ 616
Thatt made me I couþe nott wiþdrawe
My chambere of venus fro*m* a good felawe
[Yette haue I Mars is Marke vppond my fface [MS Reg. 17 D xv, *on leaf* 133]
And allso in Anoþ*er*e preuye place 620
ffor godd so wysse be My saluac*i*ond
I louede neu*er* by no discrec*i*ond
I ffollowede eu*er* Myne Appetyte
AH were he longe schorte blacke ord whyte 624
I toke no kepe so þat he lykede me
How poure he was And eke offt whatte degre] [MS Reg. *extract stops*]
Whatt shuld I sei butt att þe monþes ende
This Ioly clerkt Iankyn þatt was so hende 628
Haþ wedded me wiþ grete solempnite
And to hy*m* ȝaue [I] al þe londe and ffee
þatt euere was me ȝeuen þ*er*bifore
Butt aftere[ward] repented me ful sore · 632
He nolde suffre no þinge of my lestt
by god he smote me onys on þe lestt
ffor þatt I rentt outt of his boke a leef [leaf 138]
Thatt of þatt stroke myn eeren wexen deef 636

Stiborn I was as is a leonesse
And of my tunge a verrey Iangeleresse
And walk' I wold' as I had doñ to-forn ·
ffrom hous to hous al þouȝe he had it' sworn 640
fforþwiþ ful often tyme he wolde preche
And me [of] olde Romaynes geestes teche
How he · symplicius gallus laft' his wiff
And hure for-soke for terme of his lif 644
Nat' but' for open hede he hure say
Lokinge out' at' his door on a day
Anoþer romayn tolde he me by name
þat' for his wiff was at' a somers game 648
Wiþ-oute his wittyng' he forsoke her' eke
And þan wolde he vpon his bible seke
þat' ilk prouerbe of Ecclesiast'
Where he commaundeþ *and* forbedeþ fast' 652
Man shal not' suffre his wif to rome aboute
Than wolde he seie riȝt' þus wiþ-outen doute
Who-so þat' beeldeþ his hous aH of salous ¶ Nota bene
And prickeþ his blynde hors ouere þe falous 656
And suffereþ his wif forto seken halowes
Is worþi forto be honged on þe galowes /
¶ But al for nouȝt' I sette not' an hawe
Of his prouerbes ne of his olde lawe 660
Ne I wold not' of hym corrected be
I hate hym þat' my vice telleþ me
And so doñ moo god wote of vs þan I
þis made him wiþ me wode al vtterly 664
I nold' forbere hym in no cas
Now wil I seye ȝou soþ by seint' Thomas
Whi þat' I rent' out' of his booke a leef'
ffor which he smote me þat' I was deef' 668
He had a boke þat' gladly nyȝt' *and* daye
ffor his disport' he wolde rede alway
He cleped Valerye and theofraste [leaf 138, back]
Atte whiche boke he lowgh alway ful fast' 672

And eke þer was somtyme a clerk' in Rome
A Cardynal þat' hight' seint' Ierome
þat' made a boke a3ein Iouean
In whicħ boke eke þer was Terculan 676
Crisippus. Trocula. and holowys
That' was Abbas not' fer fro Paris/
And eke þe parables of Salomon
Ovydes art' and bokes mony oñ 680
And alle þise were bounden in oo volom
And euery ny3t' and day was his custom
Whan he had leisere and vacacioñ
ffrom oþere worldly occupacioñ 684
To reden in þis boke of wicked wyues
He knewe of hem mo legendys þan lyues
þan bene of good wyues in þe bible
ffor trusteþ wel it' is an impossible 688
þat' eny clerk' wil speken good of wyues
But' 3if it' be of holy seyntes lyues
Ne of noon oþere womman neuere þe moo /
who peinted þe lyon telle me who / 692
By god 3if' wommen had ywriten stories
As clerkes han wiþ-In her oratories
Thei wold han writen of men more wickednesse
Than al þe Mark' of Adam may redresse 696
The Children of mercury and Venus
Ben in her worchinge contrarious /
Mercury loueþ wisdom *and* science
And Venus loueþ riote and dispence 700
And for her dyuers disposicioñ
Ecħ falleþ in oþer exaltacioñ
As þus god wote mercure is disolate
In pisces wher Venus is exaltate 704
And Venus falleþ þer mercurye is reysed
þerfor no womman of no man is preised.
The clerk' whan he is olde and may not' do [leaf 139]
Of Venus werkes worþ his olde shoo 708

þan sitte he doun *and* writte in his dotage
þat' wo*m*men can not' kepe her mariage
But' nowe to p*ur*poos whi I told þe
þat' I was beten for a boke parde. 712
Vpon a nyȝt' Iankin þat' was our sire
Redde on his boke as he satte by þe fire
Of Eua first' þat' for her wickednesse
Was al mankinde brouȝt' to wrecchednesse 716
[ffor' whiche þat Ih*es*u Crist' hym' selfe was slayne [MS Reg. 17 D xv, *on leaf* 134, *back*]
That bought̃e vs w*ith* his herte blode agayne
Lo here expresse of' women' Maye ye ffynde
That women' was the losse of' AH̃ Mankynde] 720
Tho redde he me howe sampsoñ lost' his heres
Slepinge his lemman kitt' it' wiþ her sheres
þourgh̃ whiche treson lost' he boþ his eyen /
Tho redde he me if I shal not' lyen. 724
Of Ercules and of his dyanyre
þat' caused hy*m* to sette hy*m* self a fyre
No þinge forgate he þe pen*au*nce *and* woo
þat' Socrates had wiþ his wyues twoo 728
Howe þat' Ancipa cast' pisse on his hede
þe Sely man satte stille as he were dede
He wiped his hede no more durst' he seyn'
But' er þat' thonder' stint' co*m*meþ a reyn' 732
Of [1] pasipa þat' was þe quene of grete [[1] *at first* ph]
ffor schrewdenesse hy*m* þouȝt' þ^e^ tale swete
ffye speke no more it' is a grisly þinge
Of hure horrible lust' and [hure] lykynge 736
Of Clitermistra for her lecherye
þat' falsly made her husbond' forto dye
He redde it' wiþ ful good deuocioñ
He tolde me for what occasioñ 740
Amphiorax at' thebes lost' his lif'
Myn husbonde had a legende of his wif
Eriphilem. þat' for an ouch̃ of gold'
haþ prively vnto þe grekes told' 744

wher þat' her husbond' hidde hy*m* in a place
ffor which̄ he had at' Thebes sory grace
Of lyma tolde he mee and of lucye [leaf 139, back]
þei boþ made her husbondes forto dye 748
Thatt on for loue þat' oþer was for hate
lyma her husbonde on euene late
Enpoysened had for þat' she was his foo
Lucia lykerous loued her husbond' soo / 752
þat' for he shuld' vpon her alway þinke
She ȝaue hym such̄ a loue man*ere* drinke
That' he was dede or it' was by þ^e^ morowe
And þus algates husbondes han sorowe 756
¶ Than tolde he me howe on latumyus
Compleyned to his felawe arius
That' in his gardyne growed such̄ a tre
On which̄ he seide þ*at*' his wyues þre 760
Hangged he*m* selue for hertes despitous
O leue broþer quod þis arious
ȝeue me a plant' of þat' blisful tre
And in my gardyne planted shal he be 764
Of latter date of wyues haþ he redde
þat' han sclayn her husbondes in þe bedde
But' lat' hure lecchoure diȝt' hur' al þe nyȝt'
Whan þat' þe corps lay in þe floore vpriȝt' 768
And some han dryuen nayles in her brayñ
While þat' þei sclepe and þus þei han he*m* sclayñ
So*m*me han ȝeuen poysen in her drinke
He spak more harme þan hert' may þenk' 772
And þer-w*ith*-aH he knewe of moo prouerbes ¶ Solo melius est h*ab*itare.
þan in þis world' þ*er* growen grasse or herbes /
Bett' is quod he þine h*ab*itacioñ
Be wiþ a leon or a foule dragoñ 776
þan wiþ a wo*m*man vsing' forto chide
Bet' is quod he high̄ in þe roof abide
þan wiþ an angry wif do*u*n i*n* an hous
þey bene so wicked and contrarious / 780

þei haten þat' her husbondes louen ay
He seide a wo*m*man cast' her shame away
whan she cast' of her smokke *and* ferþ*er*mo [leaf 140]
A faire wo*m*man but' she be chaast' also / 784
Is lich̃ a gold rynge on a sowes nose
who wold wene or wold' suppose
The woo þat' in myn herte was *and* pyne
And whan I segh̃ he wold*e* neuere fyne 788
To reden on þis cursed boke al nyȝt'
Al sodeynly þre leues haue I pliȝt'
Out' of his boke riȝt' as he redde *and* eke
I wiþ my fist' so toke him on þe cheke 792
That' in our fire he fille bakward' ado*un*
And he vp stert' as doþ a wood lyo*un*
And wiþ his fist' he smote me on þe hede
þat' in þe flore I laie as I were dede 796
And whan he seegh̃ how stille þ*at*' I lay
He was agast' and wold' han fledde away
Til at' þe laste out' of my swowe I breide
O hastowe sclayne me fals þeef' I seide 800
And for my londe þus hastowe mordred me
Or I be dede ȝit' wil I kisse þee
And nere he come and kneled faire ado*un*
And saide dere sustere Alisoun̄ 804
As helpe me god I shal þe neuere smyte
That' I haue done it' is þi self to wite
fforȝeue it' me *and* þ*at*' I þe biseke
And ȝit' eftsones I hit' hym on þe cheke 808
And seide þeef þus moche am I wreke
Nowe wil I dye I may no lenger speke
But' at' þe last' wiþ mochel care *and* woo
We fille acorded by vs seluen twoo 812
He ȝaue me al þe bridel in myn honde
To haue þe gouern*aun*ce of hous *and* londe
And of his tunge and his hand' also
And made him brenne his boke anoñ riȝt' þoo 816

And whan þat' I had goten vnto me
By maistery al þe souereynte.
Than he seide myn owne trewe wif' [leaf 140, back]
Do as ȝou lest' þe terme of al ȝoure lif' 820
kepe ȝoure honure and kepe eke myn astate
Aftere þat' day we had neuere debate.
God helpe me so I was to him as kinde
As eny wiff from denmarke into Ynde 824
And also trewe / and so was he to me
I prey to god þat' sitte in mageste
So blesse his soule for his mercy dere
Now wil I seie my tale if ȝe wil here 828

¶ Thus endeþ þe prologe of þe wiff of bath̄

And here bygynneþ þe Tale.[1]

[1 *that is, The Wrangle between the Summoner and the Friar.*]

¶ The tale./

The frere lowe whan he had herd al þis
Now dame quod he so haue I ioye or blis
þis is a longe preamble of a tale
And whan þis somno*ur* herd þe frere gale 832
Lo quod þe somno*ur* goddis armes two
A frere wil entremete hy*m* euermoo
Loo good men a flie and eke a frere
wollen falle in euery diss̄ and eke matere 836
what' spekest' þou of preambulacio*un*
what' amble or trotte or pees or go sitte do*un*
Thou lettest' oure disport' in þis manere
ȝe wilt' þou so somnour' quod þe frere 840
Now by my fay I shal er þat' I goo
Telle a somnour such a tale or twoo
That' alle þe folk shul laughen in þis place
Now ellis frere I bishrewe þi face 844
Quod þis somnour' and I bishrewe me
But' ȝif I telle þe tales two or þre
Of freres er I come to sidyngburne
þat' I shal make þine hert' for to mo*ur*ne 848

ffor wel I wote þi pacience is goñ
Our hoost' cried pees and þat' anoñ
And seide lat' þe wo*m*man telle her tale
ȝe faren as folk' þat' dronken beñ of ale ./ 852
Do dame telle forth ȝour tale þat' is þe best' [leaf 141]
Al redy sire quod she riȝt' as ȝou lest'
If I haue licence of þis worþi frere
ȝis dame quod he telle forþ ȝoure tale we wil here 856

[*No break in the MS.*]

[*THE WIFE OF BATH'S TALE*]

[*on leaf* 141]

IN þe olde dayes of þe king' arthour' ¶ ffabula
Of which' þat' bretons speken grete hono*ur*
Al was þis land fulfilled of fayry
þe Elfe quene wiþ her Ioly companye 860
Daunced wiþ out' in mony a grene mede
þis was þe olde opynyon as I rede
I speke of mony an .C. ȝere a-goo
But' nowe can no man se noon elues moo 864
ffor nowe þe grete charite and preiers
Of lymytoures and oþer poor freres
That' serchen eu*er*y londe and eu*er*y streme
As þikke as motes in þe sonne beme 868
Blessinge halles chambers and boures
Citiees burghes castels hiȝe toures
Thropes . beernys . shipnes . dayrys
This makeþ þat' þer bene no fayrys 872
ffor þer as wonte to walk*e* was an elf'
Ther walkeþ nowe þe lymyto*ur* hy*m* self'
In vnder meles and in mornyngg*es*
And seiþ his matyns and his hoły þingg*es* 876
As he goþ in his lymitacio*un*
Wo*m*men may go nowe sauf vp *and* do*un*
In eu*er*y bussh̄ or vnder eu*er*y tre
þ*er* nys noñ oþer Incub*us* but' he 880
And he wil do hem but' dishono*ur*
And so felle it' þat' þis king' Arth*our*
Had in his hous a lusty bachilere
That' on a day come riding' fro ryvere 884

And happed alone as she was borñ
He seegh̄ a maiden walking' hy*m* byforñ
Of which̄ mayde Maugre her hede
By *ver*rey force he raft' hur*e* maydenhede 888
ffor which̄ oppression was such̄ clamo*ur* [leaf 141, back]
And such̄ pursute vnto þe king' arth*o*ur
That' dampned was þis kny3t' forto be dede
Be cours of lawe *and* shuld haue lost' his hede 892
P*er*auenture such̄ was þe statute þoo /
But' þat' þe quene and oþer ladis moo
So longe preide þe kinge of grace
Til he his liff him graunted in þat' place 896
And 3aue hym to þe quene al at' her wille
To chese whedere she wold̄ hy*m* saue or spille
The quene þonkeþ þe kinge wiþ al her my3t'
And after þis þus speke she to þe knyght' 900
Whan þat' she seegh̄ her tyme on a day
Thou stondest' 3it' quod she in such̄ aray
That' of þi lif 3it' hastowe no suerte
I graunte þe lif if þou canst' telle me 904
¶ What' þing is it' þat' wo*m*men most' desiren
Be ware and kepe þi nekbone fro yren
And if þou canst' not' telle it' me anoñ
3it' wil I 3eue þe leue forto goñ 908
A xij. monþe *and* a daye. to seke *and* lere
An answere suffisaunt' in þis mater*e*
And suerte wil I han er þat' þ*o*u passe
þi body forto 3elde in þis place 912
woo was þis kny3t' and sorowfully he sikeþ
But' what'? he may not' do al as hym likeþ
And at' þe last' he chese hy*m* forto wende
And to come a3ein ri3t' at' þe 3eres ende 916
W*ith* suche answere as god wold̄ hy*m* p*ur*veye
And takeþ his leue and wendeþ forþ his weye
He sekeþ euery hous and euery place
Where as he hopeþ forto fynde g*rac*e 920

To lere what' þing' wo*m*men louen most'
But' he nowe koude aryuen in no cost'
where as he my3te fynde in þis matere
Twoo creatures acording' in fere 924
Som*m*e seiden wo*m*men louen best' ricchesse [leaf 142]
Som*m*e seide honour' som*m*e seiden Iolynesse
Som*m*e riche aray. some seiden lust' a bedde
And oft' tyme to be wydowe *and* wedde 928
So*m*me seiden þat' we bene most' yesed
Whan þat' we bene yflatered *and* yplesed.
He goþ ful ny þe soþ I wil nat' lye
A man shal wynne vs best wiþ flaterye 932
And wiþ attendaunce and wiþ bisynesse
bene we alyned boþ more *and* lesse
And som*m*e men seyn howe þat' we louen best'
fforto be free and do ri3t' as vs lest' 936
And þat' no man repreue vs of our vice
But' say þat' we bene wise and no þinge nice
ffor trewly þer nys noon of vs alle
3if eny wi3t' wil clawe vs on þe galle 940
þat' we nyl loke or he saye vs soth̄
Assaie and he shal fynde it' þat' he doþ.
ffor be we neuer' so vicious wiþ-Inne
We wil be holden wise and clene of synne 944
And som*m*e seyn þat' grete delit' haue we
ffor to be holden stable and eke secree
And in oo p*ur*pos stedfastly to dwelle
And not' bewrey þing' þat' men vs telle 948
But' þat' tale is not' worþ a rake stele
P*ar*de we wo*m*men co*n*nen no þing' hele
Witnesse on myda wil 3e here þe tale
Ovide amonges oþer þingges smale 952
Seiþ Mida had vnder his longe heres
Growinge vpon his hede two asses eres
The whiche vice he hidde as he best' my3t'
fful subtily from euery mannys si3t' 956

þat' saue his wif þer wist' it' no moo
He loued her most' and trested to her also
He preide hir' most' þat' vnto no creature
She shuld' not' tellen of his disfigure 960
She swore hym nay for al þis world' to wynne [leaf 142, back]
She wold' do þat' vilanye or þat' synne
To make her husbond han so foule a name
ffor reprevynge of hym and foule shame 964
But' naþelees her þouȝt' þat' she dide
þat' she so longe shuld' a counseile hide
Her þouȝt' it' satte so sore about' her h*er*te
þat nedely som word her mote a-sterte 968
And siþe she durst' [nat] tellen it' no man
Doune to a marise fast' she ranne
Til she came þere her hert*e* was a fire
And as a bitor bumleþ in þe myre 972
She laide her mouþ vnto þe water' do*un*
Bewrey me not' þou watere wiþ þi souñ
Qooþ she to þe I telle it' *and* no moo
Myñ husbonde haþ longe asses eren two 976
Now is my hert' al hole now is it' oute
I myȝt' no lenger kepe it' out' of doute
Here may ȝe se þouȝe we a tyme abide
ȝete oute it' moot' we mowe no counseil hide 980
The remen*au*nte of þe tale if ȝe wil here
Redeþ ovide and ȝe mowe it' lere
¶ This knyȝt' of which my tale is specialy
Whan þat' he seegh̄ he myȝt' not' come þ*er*by 984
This is to seyn. what' wo*m*men louen most'
Wiþ-in his hert' soryful was þe goost'
But' home he goþe he myȝt' not' soio*ur*ne
þe day was come þat' homward' most' he to*ur*ne 988
And in his way it' happed hy*m* to ride
In al his care vndere a forest' side
Where he segh̄ in oon daunce goo /
Of ladis *foure and twenti*[1] *and* ȝit' moo [[1] MS xxiiij.ti.] 992

Toward þe daunce he drowe hy*m* ȝerne
In hope þat' som*m*e wisdom shuld' he lerne
But' certeynly er he cam fully þere
Vanysshed was þe daunce he nyst' not' where 996
No creature seye he þat' bare lif [leaf 143]
Saue in þe grene he sey sitting' a wif
A fouler wiȝt' þer may no man deuise
Ageyn þe knyȝt' þe old wif gan arise 1000
And seide sir knyȝt' here forþ ne lieþ no way
Telle me what' þat' ȝe seken be ȝoure fay
P*er*auenture it' may þe better' be
Thise olde folk konne moch*e* þing' quod she 1004
My leue modere quod þis knyȝt' certayñ
I am but' dede but' ȝif þat' I can sayñ
Whatt' þinge it' is þat' wo*m*men most' desire
Cowde ȝe me wisse I coude wel quyte ȝo*ur* hire 1008
Plite me þi trouþe here in my hand q*uo*d she
The next*e* þinge þat' I require þe
Thow shalt' it' doo if it' lye in þi myȝt'
And I wille telle it' ȝou er it' be nyȝt' 1012
Haue here my trouþe quod þe knyȝt' I g*ra*unte
Than quoþ she I may me wel au*au*nte
þi lif is sauf for I wil stonde þ*er*-by
Vpon my lif þe quene wil say as I 1016
Lat' se which̄ is þe proddest' of he*m* alle
þat' wereth on a kerchif or a calle
þat dar seie nay of þat' I shal ȝou teche
lat' vs goo forþ wiþ-oute lenger speche 1020
Tho rowned she a pistel in his eere
And bad hym to be glad and han no fere
Whan þei be co*m*men to þe courte þis knyȝt'
Seide he had holde his day as he had hiȝt' 1024
And redy was his answere as he seide
fful mony a noble wif and mony a maide
And mony a widowe for þat' þei be wise
þe quene her silf sitting' as a Iustise 1028

Assembled ben þis answere forto here
And aftere þis kny3t' was bode apere
And þat' þe kny3t' shuld' telle in audience
To euery wi3t' commmaunded was silence 1032
what' þing' þat' worldly wommen louen mest' [leaf 143, back]
This knyght' ne stode not' stille as doþ a beest'
But' to his questioñ anoñ answerd'
wiþ manly vois þat' al þe courte it' herde 1036
My lege lady generally quod he
wommen desiren to han souereynte
As wel ouer hir husbond *and* her loue
And forto be in maistrie hym aboue 1040
This is 3oure most' desire þou3e 3e me kille
Doþ as 3ou list' I am here at' 3oure wille
In al þe courte ne was þer wif ne mayde
Ne wydowe þat' contraried what' he saide 1044
But' seiden he was worþi han his lif
And wiþ þat' word vp stert' þat' olde wif
whicħ þat' þe knyght' sey sitting' on þe grene
Mercy quod she my souereyn lady quene 1048
Er þat 3oure courte departe do me ri3t'
I taught' þis answere vnto þis kny3t'
ffor whicħ he pli3te me his troythe þere
þe first' þinge I wolde of him requere 1052
He wold it' doo 3if it' lay in his my3t'
Bifore þe court' þan prey I þe sir kny3t'
Quod she þat' þou me take vnto þi wiff
ffor wel þou woost' þat' I. haue kepte þi liff 1056
If I sey fals seye nay vpon þi faye
þis kny3t' answerd' allas *and* weleaway
I woot' ri3t' wel þat sucħ was my bihest'
ffor goddis loue chese a newe request' 1060
Take al my good *and* lat' my body goo
Nay þan quod she I schrewe vs boþe twoo
ffor þou3e þat' I be foule *and* olde *and* poor
I nold' for al þe metal ne for ore 1064

þat' vnder erþe is graue or litl̄ aboue
But' ȝif þat' I þi wif were *and* þi loue
My loue quod he nay my dampnacioñ
Allas þat' eny of my nacioñ 1068
Shuld euere so foule ydisp*ar*aged be [leaf 144]
But' al for nouȝt' þe ende is þis þ*at*' he
Constreyned was he nedes most' her wedde
And takeþ þis olde wif and goþ to bedde 1072
Nowe wolden som*me* men seyn p*er*auent*ure*
þat' for my necligence I do no cure
To telle ȝou þe Ioie and þe araye
þat' at' þe feest' was þat' ilk' day 1076
To whicl̄ þinge shortly answere I shal
I seie þer nas no Ioye ne feest' at all̄
þer nas but' hevynesse and mochel sorowe
ffor p*r*iuely he wedded hure on a morowe 1080
And alday aftere hid hy*m* as an owle
So woo was him his wif loked so foule
Grete was þe sorowe þe knyȝt' had in his þouȝt'
Whan he was wiþ his wiff a bedde brouȝt' 1084
He walowe þ and turneþ to and froo
His olde wiff laye smyling' euermoo
And seide .o dere husbond' o benedicite
fareþ euery knyȝt' þus wiþ his wif as ȝe 1088
Is þis þe lawe of king' Arthures hous
Is euery knyȝt' of his loue þus dañgerous
I am ȝoure owne loue and eke ȝoure wiff
I am she whicl̄ þat' saued haþ ȝoure lif' 1092
And certes ȝit' did I ȝou neu*ere* vnriȝt'
whi fare ȝe þus wiþ me þe firs*te* nyȝt'
Ȝe faren licl̄ a man had lost' his witte
ffy what' is my gilt' for goddes loue telle it' 1096
And it' shal ben amended if I may
Amended quod þis knyȝt' nay nay
That' wil not' bene amended neu*ere* moo
þou art' so loþly and so old' also 1100

And þerto commen of so lowe a kinde
þat no wonder is þouȝe I walowe & wynde
So wolde god my herte wolde bres
Is þis quod she þe cause of ȝoure vnrest' 1104
ȝe certeinly quoþ he no wonder' is [leaf 144, back]
Now sire quod she I couþe amende al þis
If þat' me list' er it' were daies þre
So wel ȝe myȝt' bere ȝou vnto me. 1108
¶ But' for ȝe speken of such̃ gentilesse ¶ Nota bene de nobilibus
As is descended out' of alle ricchesse
þat' þerfore shulden ȝe be gentile men
Such̃ erroganncе nys not' worþ an heñ 1112
Loke who so is moost' vertuous alway
Privey and aperte and best' endeþ ay
To do þe beste dedis þat' he can
And take him for þ[e] grettest' gentile man 1116
Of criste cleyme we our' gentylesse
Not' of oure elders for our old ricchesse
ffor þouȝe þei ȝeue vs al our heritage
ffor which̃ we cleyme to be of hie parage 1120
ȝit' may þei not' byqueeþ for no þing'
To noon of vs her vertuous lyuynge
þat' made hem gentile men ycalled be
And bad vs folowen in such̃ degre 1124
wel can þe wise poete of florence
þat' hight' dañt' speke in þis sentence
Lo in such manere Ryme is dantes tale
fful seelde vpriseþ by his braunches smale 1128
Prowesse of man for god of his prouesse
wil þat' of hym we clayme our gentilnesse
ffor of oure elders may we no þing' clayme
But' temporel þing þat' man may hirt *and* mayme 1132
Eke euery wiȝt' wote þis as wel as I
þo gentelesse were planted naturelly
Vnto a certeyn lynage doun þe lyne
Prive *and* apert' þan wold he neuere fyne 1136

To doñ of gentelesse þe fair' office
þei myȝten do no vileny or vice
Take fire and bere it' in þe derkest' hous
By-twix þis *and* the mount' of Caucasous. 1140
And lat' men shette þe doores and go þenne [leaf 145]
ȝit' wol þe fire as faire lye and brenne
A[s] thowsand men myȝt' it' biholde
His office naturel ay wil it' holde 1144
Vp perile of liff til þat' it' die
Here may ȝe se wel how þat' gent*r*ie
Is nat' annexed to possessioñ
Siþ folk do not' her op*er*acioñ 1148
Al waie as doþ þe fire lo in his kinde
ffor god it' wote men may ful often fynde
A lordes sone doo shame and vilenye
And he þat' wil haue price of his gent*r*ie 1152
ffor he was born of a gentile hous
And had his elders noble *and* ve*r*tuous
And nyl him-seluen do no gentile dedys
Ne folow his gentile A*u*ncestre þ*at*' dede is 1156
He nys nat' gentile be he duke or erle
ffor vileyns sinful dedes make a cheerle
ffor gentilnesse nys but' reuent' renome
Of þine ancestres for hir bewte bounte 1160
Whiche is a strong' þing' for þi pe*r*sone
The gentilesse co*m*meþ from god alone
Than co*m*meth our verrey gentilesse of g*r*ace
It' was no þing' byqueþe vs w*ith* our place 1164
Thenkeþ howe noble as seiþ valerius
Was þilk Tullius Hostilius
þat' out' of pouerte roos to hie noblesse
Redeþ Senek and redeþ eke Boesse 1168
þer shul ȝe sene expresse þ*at* it' no drede is
þat' he is gentile þat doþ gentile dedys
And þerfore dere husbonde I þ*us* conclude
Al were it' þat' myn ancestres were rude 1172

ȝit' may þat' hie god an so hope I
Graunt' me grace to lyue vertuously
Than am I gentile whan þat' I bygynne
To lyuen vertuously and leuen synne 1176
And *þer* as ȝe of pouert' me repreue [leaf 145, back]
The hie god on whom þat' we byleue·
In wilful pouerte. chas to lede his lif' ¶ *Nota de pauper*tate.
And certes euery man boþ maide & wiff 1180
May vnderstonde Ih*es*u heuen kinge
Ne wold not' chese a vicious lyuynge
Glad pouerte is an honest' þing' certayñ
This wil senek and o*þere* clerkes seyñ 1184
Who þat' holte him paide of his pouerte
I holde him riche al had he nouȝt' serte
He þat' coueiteþ is a poor wiȝt'
ffor he wold' han þat' is not' in his myȝt' 1188
But' he þat' nouȝt' haþ ne keueiteþ to haue
Is riche al þoughñ men hold him but' a knaue
Verrey pouerte is signe p*ro*prely
Iuuenal [saiþ] of pouert' merily 1192
The poor man whan he goþ by þe way
Biforn þe þeues he may singe *and* play
Pouerte is hatel good and as y gesse
A ful grete bringer out' of bysynesse 1196
A g⁻ te amender' eke of sapience
To him þat' lackeþ it' in pacience
Pouerte is þis al þoughñ it' seme alenge
Possessioñ þat' no wiȝt' wil chalenge 1200
Pouerte ful often whan a man is lowe
Makeþ his god and eke him self to knowe
Pouerte in spectacle is as þenkeþ me
þorowe whichñ he may his verrey frendes see 1204
And þerfor siþ þat' I ȝou not' greue
Of my pouerte no more me repreue
Now sire of elde ȝe repreue me ¶ *Nota de senectute.*/
And certes sire þorowe noñ auctorite 1208

Where in no boke ȝe gentile *in* hono*ur*
Seyn þat' mon shuld' an olde wif do fauo*ur*
And clepe hur' modere for ȝoure gentilnesse
And auctours shal I fynde as I gesse 1212
Now þere ȝe seyn þat' I am foule *and* olde [leaf 146]
Than drede ȝou not' to bene a kokewold'
ffor filþe and helde[1] also mote I thee [1 *at first* helþe]
Bene grete wardeyns vpon chastite 1216
But' naþeles siþ I knowe ȝoure delite
I shal fulfille ȝoure worldly appetite
Chese nowe quod she oon of þise þingg*es* twey
To han me foule *and* olde til þat' I dye 1220
And be to ȝou a trewe humble wiff
And neuere ȝou displese in al my lif
Or ellis ȝe wil haue me ȝonge *and* faire
And take ȝoure auent*ur*e of þe repaire 1224
That' shal come to ȝoure hous bycause of me
Or in some o*þer*e place wel may be
Nowe chese ȝoure seluen whe*þer* ȝou likeþ
This knyght' avised him and sor sikeþ 1228
But' at' þe last' he seide in þis manere
My lady. *and* my loue. *and* wif so dere
I putte me in ȝoure wise gou*ern*a*un*ce
Geueþ ȝoure self which may be most ples*a*unce 1232
And most' hono*ur* to ȝou *and* me also
I do no force þe whe*þer*e of þe two
ffor as ȝou likeþ it' suffiseþ me
Than haue I gote of ȝou þ^e^ maistrie q*uod*' she 1236
Siþ I may chese and gouern as me list'
ȝe certes wif quod he I holde it' for þe best'
Kisse me quod she we be no lenger wroþe
ffor by my trouþe I wil be to ȝou boþe 1240
þis is to seine boþ faire and goode
I prei to god þat' I mot' steruen woode
But' I to ȝou be as sadde and trewe
As euere was wiff syþ þat' þ^e^ world' was newe 1244

And but I be to morow as fair to sene
As eny lady Emperesse or quene
þat is by-twene þe Est and eke þe west
doþ wiþ my liff and deþe riȝt as ȝou lest 1248
Cast vp þe Curtyne loke how it is [leaf 146, back]
And whan þe knyȝt sawe al þis
þat she so faire was and so yonge *þerto*
ffor ioie he hent her in his armes twoo 1252
His herte bathed in a bath of blisse
A *thousand*[1] tyme a rowe hire gan he kisse [1 MS M^L]
And she obeied him in euery þinge
That myght done hy*m* plesaunce or likinge 1256
And þus þei lyued vnto her lyues ende
In p*ar*fitt Ioye and Ih*esus* crist vs sende
Husbonde. yonge. meke *and* fresssh abedde
And grace to ouerlede he*m* þat we wedde 1260
And eke I prei to Ih*es*u short her lyues
That wil not be gouerned by her wyues
And olde and angry nygard *and* dispence
God sende hem sone a verrey pestilence 1264

¶ **Thus endeþ þe tale of þe wif of bath /**

And here bygynneþ þe prologe of þe frere [*on leaf* 146, *back*]

This worþi lymitour þis noble ffrere ¶ þe prologe
He made alway louringᵗ chere
Vpon þe somnour. butᵗ for honeste
No vyleyns word as ȝitᵗ speke he 1268
Butᵗ atᵗ þe last he seide vnto þe wif
Dame good god ȝeue ȝou riȝtᵗ good lyfᵗ
Ȝe han touched here also mote I the
In scole matere grete difficulte 1272
Ȝe han seide mochel þingᵗ riȝtᵗ wel I seie
Butᵗ dame here as we riden by þe weie
Vs nedeþ notᵗ to speken butᵗ of game
And late auctoritees a goddes name 1276
To prechen *and* to scole eke of clergie
Butᵗ ȝif itᵗ like vnto þis companye
I wil ȝou of a somnour telle a game
Parde I may wel knowe by þi name 1280
Thatᵗ of no somnour may no good be seidᵗ
I prey þatᵗ noon of ȝou be euel apeidᵗ
A somnour is a romere vp and doun [leaf 147]
Wiþ a mendement of fornicacioun 1284
And is ibete atᵗ euery townes ende
Ourᵗ hoostᵗ þoo spakᵗ a. sire ȝe shuld beñ hende
And Curteis as man of ȝourᵗ astatᵗ
In company we wil no debate 1288
Telleþ ȝoure tale and latᵗ þᵉ somnour be
Nay quod þe somnour latᵗ him say to me
Whatᵗ so him lestᵗ. whan itᵗ commeþ to my lott
Be god Iᵗ shal hym quyte euery grott 1292
I shal him telle swichñ a grete honour
Itᵗ is to be a flaterynᵍ lymytourᵗ
And eke of ful mony an oþer crime
Which nedeþ notᵗ rehersen atᵗ þis tyme 1296
And his office I shal hym telle ywis
Ourᵗ hooste answerdᵗ pees no more of þis
And afterward he seide vnto þe frere
Telle forþ ȝoure tale my owen maisterᵗ dere 1300
¶ **Thus endeþ þe prologe of þe frere.**

And

here begynneþ þe ffreres tale.

Whilom þer was dwellingt in my contre ¶ The tale./
An Archedeken a man of hie degre
Thatt boldely did execusioñ
In punysshingt of fornicacioñ 1304
Of whicħ craftt and eke of baudry
Of diffamacioñ and avoutrye
Of chirche reues *and* of testamentes
Of contractes and of lak of sac*ra*mentes 1308
Of vsure and symonye also
Buttt certes lecchours did he grettestt woo
Þei shulden syngen if þei were hentt
And Smale Tythers weren foule shent 1312
If eny p*er*son woldd vpon he*m* pleyne
Þer myȝtt astertt him no pecunyal peyne
ffor smale tyþes and eke smale offringe
He made þe puple spitously to singe 1316
ffor er the bisshope kauȝtt hem wiþ his hoke [leaf 147, back]
Þei weren in þe Archedekens boke
And þan had he þorowe his Iurisdictioñ
Pouer to don on hem correccioñ 1320
he had a somnourr redy to his handd
A sclyer boye was non in engelondd
ffor sotilly he had his especiale
Thatt tauȝtt hy*m* where þattt hy*m* myȝtt availe 1324
He coude spare of lecchou*rs* on or twoo
To techen hym to *four and twenty*[1] moo [1 MS xxiiij]
ffor þouȝe this somno*ur* wode were as an hare
To telle his harlotry I wil nott spare 1328

ffor we bene out' of her correcciõn
þei han of vs noñ Iurisdictioñ
Ne neuere shullen teerme of al her lyues
Peter' so bene þe wo*m*men of þe stewes 1332
Quod this somno*ur* yput' out' of our cure
Pees wiþ meschaunce *and* wiþ misauenture
Thus seide our hoost' *and* lat' hy*m* telle his tale
Now telleþ forþ and lat' þe somno*ur* gale 1336
Ne spareth nouȝt' myn owne Maister' dere
This fals þeef þis somno*ur* quod þe frere
Had alway baudes redy to his honde
As eny hauke to lure in Engelonde 1340
That' telle him al þe secre þ*a*t thei knewe
ffor hure a-queyntance was nat' come of newe
þei weren his aprouers prively
He toke hym silf a grete p*r*ophete þerby 1344
His maistere knewe not' al way what' he wan
wiþ-outen maundement' of a lewde man
He coude so*m*mon vpeyn of c*r*istes curs
And þei were inly glad to fille his purs 1348
And made hym grete festes atte nale
And riȝt' as Iudas had purses smale
And was a þeef riȝt' such̃ a þeef was he
His maister' had but' half his dwete 1352
He was ȝif I shal ȝeuene hy*m* his laude [leaf 148]
A theef and eke a somno*ur* *and* a bawde
He had eke wenches of his retenue
That' whedere þat' sir' Rob*er*de or sir' hwe 1356
Or Iohñ or rauf or who þat' it' were
þat lay by hem þei tolde it' in his eere
Thus was þe wenche and he of on assent'
And he wolde focche a feyned maundement' 1360
And somne hem to þe chapitere boþ twoo
And pille þe man and lat' þe wenche goo
Than wold he sei frend I shal for þi sake
To strike þe out' of oure letters blake 1364

þe ther no more as in þis caas travaile
I am þi frende þer I þe may availe
Certeyn he knewe of bribers moo
þan possible is to telle ȝou vnto to/ 1368
ffor in þis world is no dogge for no bowe
þat knoweþ and hert deer. from an olde bete kowe
þan þat þis somnour knewe a sly lecchour
Or auouter or ellis a paramour 1372
And for þat was þe fruyte of al þe rent
Therfore on hit he sette al his entent
And so byfelle þat ones on a day
This somnour euer wayting on his pray 1376
Rode forto somne an old wif a ribibe
ffeynyng a cause for he wold haue a bribe
And happed þat he sawe to-fore hym ride
A gey ȝeman vnder a forest side 1380
A bowe he bare and Arowes briȝt *and* kene
He had vpon a courtepie of grene
An hatte vpon his hede wiþ stringges blake
Sire quod þis somnour. haile *and* wel ytake 1384
welcome quod he and euery good felawe
whider ridest þowe vnder þis grene wood shawe
Seide þis ȝeman wilt thou fer to-day
This somnour hym answerd *and* seide nay 1388
Here fast by quod he is myne entent [leaf 148, back]
To riden for to reisen vp a rent
It longeþ to my lordes dewte
Art þou þan a bailyf. ȝe quod he 1392
He durste not for verrey filþe *and* shame
Say þat he was a somnour for þe name
Depar-dieux quod þis ȝeman dere broþer
þou art a baillif and I am anoþer 1396
I am vnknowen as in þis contre
Of þine aqueyntañce I wil prey þe
And eke of breþerhede if þat þou lest
I haue gold and siluer in my chest 1400

ȝif þat' þe happed come into o*ur* shire
Al shal be þine riȝt' as þou wold' desire
Gr*aun*te mercy quod þis somno*ur* by my feiþe
Eu*er*ech̃ in oþeres honde his trouþe leiþe 1404
ffor to be swore breþeren to þei dye
And wiþ þat' word þei ride forþ her wey
This somno*ur* wiþ þat' was as ful of Iangles
As ful of venyme beñ þise waryangles 1408
And euer enquiring' vpon eu*er*y þinge
Broþer quod he wher' is ȝour dwellinge
Anoþer day if I shuld' ȝou seche
þis ȝeman him answerd' in softe spech̃ 1412
Broþer quod he ferre in þe north̃ contre
Wher' as I hope somtyme I shal þe See
Or we dep*ar*te I shal þe so wel wisse
þat' of myn hous shalt' þou neuere mysse 1416
Now broþere quod þis somno*ur* I ȝou pray
Teche me while we riden by þe waye
Siþ þat' ȝe bene a balif as am I
So*m*me subtilite telle me feiþfully 1420
In myn office howe þat' I may most wynne
And spareþ not' for conscience ne synne
But' as my broþere telle me howe doo ȝe.
Nowe by my treuþe broþere dere seide he 1424
As I shal tellen þe a feiþful tale [leaf 149]
My wages be ful streit' and smale
My lorde is hard' to me and daungerous
And' myn office ful laborous 1428
And þerfore by extorcions y lyue
ffor soþ I [take] al þat' men wil me ȝeue
Algate by scleyght' or violence
ffrom ȝeer to ȝeer I wynne al my dispence 1432
I can no better tellen feiþfully
Now certes quod þis somno*ur* so fare I
I spare not' to take god it' wote
But' ȝif it' be to hevy or to hote 1436

What' I may gete in counseile priveily
No maner' conscience of þat' haue I
Ner myn extorcioñ I myȝt' not' lyuen
Of suche Iapes nyl I not' be shryuen 1440
Stomake . ne for conscience ne knowe I noñ
I schrewe þise shrift' faders euerechoñ
Wel ben we mette by god and by seint' Iame
But' leue broþer telle me þan þi name 1444
Quoþ þis somnour in þis mene while
þis ȝeman gan a litel forto smyle
Broþer quod he wiltow þat' I þe telle
I am a feende my dwellyng' is in helle 1448
And here I ride aboute my purchasing'
To wete where men wollen ȝeue me eny þing'
My purchace is to fette of all my rent'
Loke how þou ridest' for þe same entent' 1452
To wynne good þou recchest' not' howe
Riȝt' so fare I for ride wold' I nowe
Vnto þe worldes eende for a preye .
A quod þis somnour benedicite what' ȝe seie 1456
I wende ȝe were a ȝeman trewly
ȝe han a mannes shappe as wel as I
Han ȝe a figure þan determynate
In helle þer ȝe bene in ȝour estate 1460
Nay certeynly quoþ he þere haue we noon [leaf 149, back]
But' whan vs likeþ we can take vs oon
Or ellis make ȝou seme we bene shape
Somtyme a man or like an ape 1464
Or like an aungel can I ride or goo
It' is no wonder' þing' þouȝe it' be so
A lousy Iogelour can desceyue þe
And parde ȝit' can I more craft' þan he 1468
Why quoþ þis somnour ride ȝe þan or goñ
In sondry shappe and not' alway in oon
ffor we quod he wil vs in such forme make
As most' able is our praies forto take 1472

What' makeþ ȝou to han al þis labo*ur*
fful mony a cause lecue sir' somno*ur*
Seide þis feende but' al þing' haþ tyme
The day is short' and it' is passed p*r*ime 1476
And ȝit' ne wanne I no þinge in þis day
I wil entende to wynnyng' ȝif I may
And nat' entende our wittes to declare
ffor broþer myne þi witte is alto bare 1480
To vnderstonde þouȝe I tolde hem þe
But' for þowe askest' whi labo*ur*en we
ffor somtyme be we goddes inst*r*umen*tes*
And menes to do his comaundemen*tes* 1484
Whan þat' him list' vpon his creatures
In dyuers actes and in dyuers fig*ur*es
W*ith*-outen hym we han no myȝt' certeyn
ȝif þat' him list' to stonden þer aȝein 1488
And some tyme at' our' pray han we leue
Only þe body and nat' þe soule greue
Witnesse on Iob whom þat' we diden woo
And somtyme han we myȝt' of boþ[e] two 1492
þis is to seyn of soule and body eke
And somtyme we bene suffered forto seke
Vpon a man and do his soule vnrest'
And nat' his body and al is for þe best' 1496
Whan he w*ith*stondeþ our temptacioñ [leaf 150]
It' is a cause of [his] saluacioñ
Al be it' þat' it' was not' our entent'
He shulde be sauf but' þat' we wold hy*m* hent' 1500
And somtyme be we seru*au*ntes vnto man
As þe erchbisshope seint' dunstan
And to þe appostels s*er*u*au*nte was I
ȝit' telleþ me quod þe somno*ur* feiþfully 1504
Make ȝe ȝou newe bodies þus alway
Of elementz þe feende answerd nay
Som*me* tyme we feyne and somtyme we arise
Wiþ dede bodies in ful sondry wise 1508

And speke as resonably and faire well
As to þe Phitonessa. did samuell
And ȝit' wil somme men say it' was not' he
I doo no fors of ȝoure dyvynite 1512
But' oon þing' warne I þe I wil not' Iape
Thow wilt' algates witte howe we be shape
þou shalt' here afterward my broþer dere
Come þer þe nedeþ nat' of me to lere 1516
ffor þou shalt' be þine owne experience
Come into þe Chaiere rede þis sentence
Bette þan virgil while he was a lyue
Or Dante also now lat' vs ride blyue 1520
ffor I wil hold company wiþ þe
Til it' be so þat' þou forsake me
Nay quod þis somnour þat' shal not' betide
I am a ȝeman knowe is ful wide 1524
Mi trouþe wil I holde to þe as in þis cas
ffor þei þou were þe deuel Sathanas
My trouþe wil I holde to my broþer
As I am sworn and eche of vs to oþer' 1528
ffor to be trewe broþer in þis caas
And broþer we goon to our purchas
Take þou þi parte what' men wil þe ȝeue
And I shal myne þus may we boþ[e] lyue 1532
And ȝif þat' eny of vs haue more þan oþere [leaf 150, back]
Lat' him be trewe and part' it' with his broþer
I graunte quod þe deuel be my fay
And wiþ þat' word þei ryden forth her way 1536
And riȝt' at' þe enteringe of þe townes ende
To which þe sompnour shope hym for to wende
þei sey a cart' þat' charged was wiþ hay
Which þat' a carter droof' forþ on his way 1540
Depe was þe way for which þe carte stoode
This Carter smote and stroof as he were woode
Haite broke haite scotte what' spare we for þe stonys
þe feende quod he ȝou fecche boþ body and benys 1544

As ferforþly as euere were ȝe foled/
So moche woo as I haue for ȝou tholed
þe deuel haue all boþ hors and carte *and* hay
þouȝt this somnou*r* here shul we haue a play 1548
And nere þe feende he drouȝe as nauȝt ne were
fful p*r*iueyly and rouned in his eere
Harken my broþer herken be þi feiþ
Herestow nat howe þe carter seiþ 1552
Hent it anoñ for he haþ ȝeuen þe
Boþ hey and carte and eke his caples þre
Nay quod þe deuel god wote neu*er* a dele
It is not his entent trust me wele 1556
Aske hym þi silf ȝif þou not trestest me
Or ellis stint a while and þou shalt Se
This Carter thakked his hors on þe croupe
And þei bygonne to drowe and to stoupe 1560
Haite nowe quod he þat Ih*es*u c*r*ist ȝou blisse
And al his hond werk boþ more and lesse
That was wel twite myn owne lyarde boy
I prey god saue þe and seint loye 1564
Now is my carte out of þe sclough p*ar*de
lo bro*þer* quod þe feend. *and* what told I þe
Here may ȝe se myne owne dere bro*þere*
þe Carle spak oo þinge but he þouȝt ano*þer* 1568
lat vs go forþ abouten our viage [leaf 151]
Here wynne I no þinge vpon cariage
Whan þat þei co*m*men somwhat out of þe to*u*n
This somnou*r* to his broþer gan to ro*u*n 1572
Broþer quod he here wo*n*neþ an olde rebekke
þat had almost as leef to lese her nekke
As forto ȝeue a peny of hir*e* good.
I wil haue xij. pans þouȝe þat she be wode 1576
Or I wil somne hure to our office
And ȝit good woote of hure knowe I no vice
But for þou canst nat as in þis contree
Wynne þi cost take here ensample of me 1580

This somnour knokkeþ at þe wydous gate
Come out he seide þou olde viritate
I trowe þou hast somme frere or preest with þe
Who clappeth̃ þer seide þis wif benedicite 1584
God saue ȝou sir what is ȝoure swete wille
I haue quod he to somne þe here a bille
Vp peyne of cursinge loke þat þou be
To-morowe by-forn our Archedeken kne 1588
To answere to þe courte of certeyn þingges
Now lord quod she crist Ihesu king of kingges
So wisly helpe me as I no may
I haue be sik and þat ful mony a day 1592
I may not goo so ferre quod she ne ride
But I be dede so prickeþ it in my side
May I not axe a libeH̃ Sir somnour
And answere þere by my procuratour 1596
To suche a þinge as men wolden opposen me
ȝis quoþ this somnour pay anoñ late See
xij penys to me and I wil þe aquite
I shal no profit han þerby but lite 1600
My maister haþ þe prophete *and* nat I
Come and lat me riden hastely
ȝeue me .xij pans I may no lenger tarye
xij. quod she lady seinte Marye 1604
So wisly helpe [me] out of care *and* synne [leaf 151, back]
þis wide world̃ þouȝe I shuld it wynne
Ne haue I not xij pens wiþ-in my holde
ȝe knowe wel þat I am poor *and* olde 1608
Kithe ȝoure almesse on me poor wrecche
nay þan quoþ he þe foule fende me fecche
ȝif I þe excuse þouȝe þou shulde be spilt
Allas quod she god wote I haue no gilt 1612
Pay me quod he or by the swete Anne
As I wil bere away þi newe panne
ffor dette which̃ þou owest me of olde
Whan þat þou made þine husbond̃ kukwold̃ 1616

I paide at' home for þi correctioñ
þou lixte quod she be my saluacioñ
Ne was I neuere or nowe widowe ne wiff'
Somned vnto ȝoure courte *in* al my liff 1620
Ne neu*ere* I nas but' of my body trewe
Vnto þe deuel blake & rowe of hwe
ȝeue I þi body and my panne also
And whan þe deuel herd' her curse soo / 1624
Vpon her knees he seide in þis manere
Now mabely myñ owne modere dere
Is þis ȝou[r] wiłł in ernest' þat' ȝe seye
þe deuel quod she fette hy*m* er he deye 1628
And pan and al but' he wil hy*m* repent'
Nay olde stott þat' is not' myn entent'
Quod þis somno*ur* for to repente me
ffor eny þing' þat' I haue had of þe 1632
I wold' I had þi smokke and euery cloþe
Nowe broþer quod þe deuel be not' wrothł
þi body and þis panne is myñ by riȝt'
þou shalt' wiþ me to helle ȝit to-nyȝt' 1636
Where þou shalt' knowe of our' p*r*iuete
More þan a maist*er* of diuinite
And wiþ þat' word' þis foule fende hy*m* hent'
Body and soule he w*ith* þe deuel went' 1640
Wher þ*at*' somno*ur*s han her heritage [leaf 152]
And god þat' made after' his ymage
Man-kinde saue and gyde vs al *and* some
And lene þis somno*ur* good man to bycome 1644
Lordingg*es* I couþe han told' ȝou quod þ*is* frere
Had I had leisere for þis somno*ur* here
Aftere þe text'. c*r*ist. paule *and* Iohn
And of oure oþ*er*e doct*our*s mony on 1648
Which peynes þat' ȝour' hertes myȝt' ag*ri*se
Al be it' so no tunge may deuise
þouȝe þ*at*' I myȝt' a ·Mł. wynter' telle
þe peynes of þilk' c*ur*sed hous of helle 1652

But forto kepe vs from þat cursed place
Wakeþ and preieth Ih*e*su for his grace
So kepe vs fro þe tempt*our* sathanas
Herkeneþ þis word beþ war*e* as i*n* þ*i*s cas 1656
þe lyon sitte in his awaite alway
To sclee þe Innocent ȝif þ*at* he may.
Disposeþ ay ȝour*e* hertes to wiþstond
þe fende þat ȝou wold make þral *and* bond 1660
He may not tempten ȝou ou*er* ȝour myȝt
ffor c*r*ist wil be ȝoure champioñ and knyȝt
And preieþ þat þis somno*ur* hy*m* repent
Of his mysdede er þat þe fende hy*m* hent 1664

¶ **Thus endeþ þe frere his tale.**

¶ And here bygynneþ þe prologe of þe somnour [on lf 152]

This somnour in his stirop hiȝe stode ¶ þe prologe
Vpon þis frere his herte was so wode
þat' like an aspen leef he quoke for Ire
Lordingges quod he but' oo þinge I desire 1668
I ȝou biseche þat' of ȝour' curtesie
Siþens ȝe han herde this fals frere lye
As suffre me I may a tale telle
þis frere boosteth þat' he knoweþ helle 1672
And god woote it' is litel wondere
ffreres and feendes bene but' lite asonre
ffor parde ȝe han oft' tyme herd telle [leaf 152, back]
How þat' a frere rauysshed was in helle 1676
In spirit' ones by A visioun
And as an aungel lad him vp & doun
To shewen him the peynes þat' þer were
In alle þe place seghe he not' a frere 1680
Of oþer folk' he seghe ynow in woo
Vnto þis aungel speke þe frere þoo
Nowe sire quod he han freres suche grace
þat' noon of hem shal come to þis place 1684
ȝis quoþ þis aungel mony a myliou̅n
And vnto Sathanas he lad hym doun
And now haþ sathanas seiþ he a tale
Bradder' þan of þe Carike is a saile 1688
hold vp þi taile þou sathanas quod he
Showe forþ þine ers and lat' þe frere see
Wher is þe nest' of freres in þis place
And er þan half a forlonge wey of space 1692

Ryȝt' as been swermen out' of an hyve
Out' of þe deuels ers þei gon drive
xx^ti^. thousand' freres on a route
And þought' helle swarme al aboute 1696
And com*m*en aȝein as fast' as þei mowe goñ
And in his ers þei crepten cu*e*rechoñ
He clapte his taile aȝein and lay stille
This frere whan he loked had his fille 1700
Vpon þise turmentz of þis sory place
His spiret' god restored of his g*rac*e
Vnto his body aȝein *and* he awoke
But' naþelees for fere ȝit' he quoke 1704
So was þe deueles ers ay in his mynde
which̄ is his heritage of verrey kinde
God saue you alle saue þis c*ur*sed frere
My prologe wil I ende in þis manere 1708

¶ **Thus endeþ þe p*ro*loge of þe somno*ur***

And here bygynneþ þe somno*ur* tale

LOrdyngges þer/ is in york-shire as I gesse [leaf 153]
A mershy contray called holdernesse
In which þ*ere* wentᵗ a lymito*ur* aboute
To preche and eke to begge itᵗ is no doute 1712
And so byfelle þatᵗ on a day þis frere
Had preched atte chirch̄ in þis manere
And specialy abouen euery þinge
Excited he þe puple in his prechinge 1716
To trentales and [to ȝeue] for goddis sake
Therwiþ men myȝte holy howses make
Ther as dyuyne seruyse is honoured
Nouȝtᵗ þ*ere* as itᵗ is waasted and deuoured 1720
Ne þere itᵗ nedeþ notᵗ forto be ȝeue
As to possessoures þatᵗ may ellis lyue
Thonked be god in wele *and* habunda*u*nce
Trentales seide he delyuereþ fro pen*au*nce 1724
Her frendes soules as wel olde as yonge
ȝif þatᵗ þei bene hastely ysonge
Nouȝtᵗ forto holde a preestᵗ Ioly *and* gay
He syngeþ notᵗ buttᵗ oon masse on a day 1728
Delyuereþ outᵗ quod he anoñ þe soules
fful hardᵉ itᵗ is wiþ flesshhoke eiþ*er* w*ith* oulys
Nul spede ȝou hastely for c*r*istes sake 1732
To kepe ȝou from peynes of fendes blake 1731
And whan þe frere had seide al his entente
W*ith* qui cu*m* pa*t*re forþ he wente
Whan folk in chirche had ȝeue hy*m* whatᵗ he*m* lest
He wentᵗ his way no lenger woldᵉ he restᵗ 1736

Wiþ scrippe and tipped staf tukked ful hie
In euery hous he gan to pore and prie
And beggeþ mele or chese or ellis corñ
His felawe had a staf tipped wiþ horñ 1740
A paire of tables of yuorie
And a poyntel polsshed fetisly
And w[r]ote alway þe names þ*er* he stode
And all*e* folk þat' ȝaue hy*m* eny goode 1744
Ascaunce as he wold' for hem preye [leaf 153, back]
ȝif vs a busshel whete. malt' or reye
A goddys kechil or a trippe of chese
A bosshel malt' or ellis of peese 1748
A goddys half peny or a masse penye
Or ȝeue vs of ȝoure [bran] ȝif ye haue enye
A dagon of ȝour blanket' leue dame
Our suster deer loo here I write ȝour' name 1752
Bacon or beef or suchñ þinge as ȝe finde
A sturdy harlot' went' alway behinde
þat was her hoostes man and bere a sak'
And what' men ȝaue hy*m* leide it' on his bak' 1756
And whan he was out' of þe door anoñ
He pleyned away [þe] names euerechoñ
þat' he biforn had writen in his tables
He serued [hem] wiþ nyfels and wiþ fables 1760
Nay þer-In þu lixt' somno*ur* q*uo*d þe frere
Pes quod oure hoost' for c*r*istes modere dere
Telle forþ þi tale and spare it' not' at all
ffor hy*m* ne for noon o*þer*e what so fall 1764
So longe he went' hous by hous til he
Come to an hous þer he was wont' to be
Refresshed more þan in an .C. places
Seke lay þe good man þat' of the place es / 1768
Bedred vpon a couche lowe he lay
D*eu*s hic' quod he. o thomas frende good day
Seide þis frere curtesly *and* soft'
Thomas god ȝeeld' ȝou wel oft 1772

Haue I vpon þis benche faren ful wele
Here haue I eten mony a mery mele
And from þe benche he droof away þ^e^ catt'
And leide a doune his potent' *and* his hatt' 1776
And eke his scripte and sette hy*m* soft ado*un*
His felawe was go walked in to þe to*un*
fforþ wiþ his knaue into þat' hostelerye
Where as he shope hym þilk*e* ny3t' to lye 1780
O dere Maister' quod þis sik*e* man [leaf 154]
How haue 3e farn siþ þat' marcħ bygan
I segħ 3ou nou3t' þis fourteny3t' day *and* more
God wote quod he labowred haue I ful sore 1784
And specialy for þi saluacioñ
Haue I seide mony a precious orisoñ
And for our oþer frendes god hem blesse
I haue þis day ben at' 3o*ur* chircħ at messe 1788
And seide a sermon after' my symple witte
Not' al aftere þe text' of holy writte
ffor it' is hard to 3ou as I suppose
And þerfore I wil teche 3ou al þe glose 1792
Glosinge is glorious þing' certeyñ
ffor letters sleþ so as we clerkes seyñ
There haue I taught' he*m* to be charitable
And spende her good þer it' is resonable 1796
And þer I seghe *our* dame a where is she
3ondere in þe 3erde I trowe she be
Saide þis man and she wil come anoñ
Ey maister' welcome be 3e be seint' Ioħñ 1800
Seide þis wiff how fare 3e hertely
This frere riseþ vp wel curteisly
And hure enbraseþ in his armes narowe
And kisseþ hure swetely *and* chirkeþ as a sparowe 1804
Wiþ his lippes. dame quod he ri3t' wel
As he þat' is 3our' *seruaunte* eu*er*y deħ
Thonked be god þat' 3ou 3af soule *and* liff
3it' sey I not' þis day so faire a wiff 1808

In al þe churche god so saue me
ȝe god amende alH fautes sir' q*uod*' she
Algates welcome be ȝe by my fay
Graunt' mercy dame þis haue I fonde alway 1812
But' of ȝoure grete goodnesse be ȝo*ur* leue
I wold prey ȝou þat' ȝe nold' not' greue
I wil wiþ thomas speke a litel throwe
Thise Curato*urs* bene ful necligent' *and* sclowe 1816
To grope tenderly a conscience [leaf 154, back]
In shrift' in preching' is my diligence
And stody in peter wordes *and* poules
I walke and fisshe cristen mennys soules 1820
To ȝeelde Ihesu his propre rent'
To speke his wordes is al myn entent'
Nowe by ȝoure feiþ dere maister' q*uod*' she
Chideþ him wel for seinte trinite 1824
He is as angry as a pisse myre
þouȝe þat' he haue al þat' he can desire
þouȝe I wrie hym on nyȝt' *and* make hym warme
And on hym lay my legge or myn arme 1828
He groneþ lich oure boor þat lieþ in þe stie
Oþer disport' of him non haue I
I may not' plese him in no manere cas
O Thomas Ieo vous dye. thomas thomas 1832
This makeþ þe fende this wil be amended.
Ire is a þinge þat/ hie god haþ defended
And þerof wil I speke a word' or twoo
Now maister quoþ þe wif er þat' I goo 1836
What' wil ȝe dyne I wil goo þeraboute
Now dame q*uod*' he Ieo vous dye sanz doute
haue I of a Capon nouȝt' but þe lyuere
And of ȝoure softe brede but' a shyuere 1840
And aftere þat' a rosted pigges hede
But' þat' I nolde for me no beest' were dede
þan had I wiþ ȝou homely suffisaunce
I am a man of litel sustynaunce 1844

My spirit haþ [his] fostring' in þe bible
þe body is ay so redy *and* so penyble
To wake þat' my stomak' is destroied
I prei ȝou dame be ȝe nouȝt' anoyed 1848
Þouȝe I frendly to ȝou my co*u*nsail shewe
By god I nold not telle it' it' but' a fewe
Nowe sire q*uod* she but' oo word er ȝe goo
My childe is dede w*ith*-in þise wekes twoo 1852
Sone after' þat' ȝe wenten out' of þis toun [leaf 155]
His deþ I segh̄ by reuelacio*u*n
Seide þis frere at' home in our dorto*ur*
I dar wel seyn̄ er þat' half an houre 1856
Aftere his deþ I segh̄ hy*m* born to blisse
In myn avision̄ god me so wis
So dyd our Sexten *and* our fermerere
þat' han bene trewe freres .l. ȝere 1860
þei may now god byþonke of his lone
Maken hir Iuble and walken alone
And vp I aroos and alh̄ o*ur* couent' eke
Wiþ mony a tere trilling' vpon o*ur* cheke 1864
Wiþ-oute noys of clateryng' of bellys
Te deu*m*. was our songe *and* no þing' ellys
Saue þat' to c*r*ist I seide an orison̄
Thonkinge hym of my reuelacion̄ 1868
ffor sir' and dame trestеþ me riȝt' wel
Our orisons bene more effectueh̄
And more we seen of c*r*istes secre þingges
Þan borel folk' or þouȝe þei were kingges 1872
We lyue in pouerte and in abstinence
And burel folk' in riechesse *and in* dispence
In mete and drink' and her foule delite
We han þis worldly lust' al in dispite 1876
¶ Lazarus and Diues. liveden dyu*er*sly
And dyuers guardon had þei þerby
Who so wil prey most fast *and* be clene
And fat' his soule and make his body lene 1880

We faren as seiþ þe apostel . cloþe *and* fode
Suffiseþ vs þouȝe þei be not' ful goode
The clannes and þe fasting' of vs freres
Makeþ þat' criste acceptеþ our preieres 1884
Loo Moyses fourty daies *and* fourty nyȝt'
ffast' or þe hie god of myȝt'
Spak' wiþ him *in* þe Mount' synay
Wiþ empty woombe of fasting' mony a day 1888
Resceyued he þe law þat' was writen/ [leaf 155, back]
wiþ goddys fyngere and hely wil ȝe witen
In mount' Oreb er he had eny speche
Wiþ hie god þat' is our saules leche 1892
he fast' longe and was in contemplance
Aaron þat' had þe temple in gou*ernau*nce
And eke þe oþer preestes euerechoñ
Into þe temple whan þei shuld goñ 1896
To prey for þe puple *and* to do seruise
þei nold drinke in no manere wise
No drink' which þat' hem dronke myȝt' make
But' þer in abstinence prey and wake 1900
lest þat' þei diden take hede what' I saye
But' þei be sobre þat' for þe puple praye
war þat' I seie no more for it' suffiseþ /
Our lorde Ih*es*u as holy writte deuyseþ 1904
ȝaf vs ensample of fastinge *and* preiers
Therfore we mendena*u*ntz we sely freres
Be wedde to pouerte *and* contynence
To charite humblenesse and abstinence 1908
To p*er*secucyon for riȝtwisnesse
To wepinge misericord' *and* clennesse
And þerfore may ȝe see þat' o*ur* preiers
I speke of vs we mendena*u*ntz we freres 1912
Bene to þe hie god more acceptable
þan ȝo*ur*es w*ith* þe fest' at' þe table
ffor p*ar*adis first' if I shal not' lye
was man outchased for his glotenye 1916

And chaast' man was in p*ar*adis certeyn
But' harken nowe Thomas wha[t] I wil seyn
I haue no tixte þerof as I suppose
But' I shal fynde it' in a man*er*e glose 1920
That' specialy our lord*e* swete Ih*esus*
Spake by freres whan he seide þus
Blessed be þei þat' poor in spirite be
And so forþ al þe gospel may ȝe se 1924
Wher' it' be like our professioñ [leaf 156]
Or her þat' swym*m*en in possessioñ
ffye on her' pompe *and* on her glotenye
And on her lewdenesse I ham defie 1928
Me þenkeþ þei ben like Iouynyan
ffatte as a whale and walking' as a swan
Al vinolent' as þe betel in þe spence
Her preier is of ful grete reuerence 1932
Whan þei for soules seyn þe Psalme of davyd
Io boþ þei seyn Cor meu*m* eructauit'
Who followeþ c*r*istes gospel *and* his lore
But' we þat' humyle ben *and* chast' *and* pore 1936
Worchers of goddis word [not] auditou*r*s
þerfore riȝt' as an hawke vp at' a sours
Vp springeþ into þe eire. so preiers
And charitable chastite of bysy freres 1940
Making' her soures to goddes eren too
Thomas riȝt' so as mote I ride or goo
And by þat' lord þat' cleped was seynt yve
Ner þowe our broþer þou shuldest' not thryve 1944
In oure Chapitle prey we day *and* nyȝt'
To c*r*ist' þat' he þe sende hele *and* myȝt'
Thi body forto welden hastely
God wote quoþ he no þing' þ*er*of fele I 1948
As helpe c*r*ist' as I haue i*n* fewe ȝeres
Spended vpon mony dyuers freres
Wel mony a pounde ȝit' fare I ne þe bette
Certeyn my good is almost' be-sette 1952

ffare wele my good for it' is almost' agoo
þe frere answerd' o Thomas dost' þou so
What' nedeþ ȝou diuers freres seche
What' nedeþ hym þat' haþ a perfit' leche 1956
To sechen oþer leches in þe toun
Ȝour inconstañce is ȝour confusioñ
Holde ȝe me þan or ellis our couent'
To prey for ȝou ben insufficient' 1960
Thomas þat' Iape is not' worþ a myte [leaf 156, back]
Ȝoure Maladie is for we haue to lite
A ȝeue þat' Couent' half a quarter otys
A ȝeue þat' Couent' *four and twenti*[1] grotys [[1] MS ·xxiiijᵗᵉ] 1964
A ȝeue þat' frere a peny *and* lat' hym goo
Nay nay thomas it' may no þing' be so
What' is a ferþing' parted in twelve
Lo eche þing' is counted in hym selue 1968
Is more stronge whan it' is so sclatered.
Thomas of me þou shalt' not' be flatered /
þou woldest' haue our labour al for nouȝt'
þe hie god þat' al þis world' haþ wrouȝt' 1972
Seiþ þat' þe werkman is worþi his hire
Thomas nouȝt' for ȝoure tresour I desire
As for my silf but' þat' al our Couent
To prey for ȝou is al our diligent' 1976
And forto beelden cristes owne chirche
Thomas if ȝe wil lerne forto wirche
Of beeldinge vp of churches may ȝe finde
If it be good in Thomas lif of ynde 1980
Ȝe ligge here ful of anger and of yre
wiþ which þe deuel sette ȝour hert' on fire
And chiden here þis holy Innocent'
Ȝour wif þat' is so meke *and* pacient' 1984
And þerfore trow me ȝif ȝou list'
Ne strive not' wiþ þi wif as for þe best'
And bere þis word' away now by þi feiþ
Touchinge suchñ þing' lo what' þe wise man seiþ 1988

Wiþ-Inne þi hous ne be þou no lyoñ
To þi sogettes do þou noon op*ressio*ñ
Ne make þou nat' þine aqueyntau*n*ce forto fle
And ȝit' Thomas eftsones charge I þe 1992
Be ware of yre þat' in þi bosom slepeþ
ware þe for the serpent' þat' so sclily crepeþ
vnder þe gras and styngeþ sotilly
Be war my sone and harken paciently 1996
That xx^ti^ þousand men han lost' her lyues [leaf 157]
ffor stryuyng' w*ith* her lemmanes *and* her wyues
Now siþ ȝe han so holy meke a wif
What' nedeþ ȝou thomas to make strif 2000
Ther nys iwis no serpent' so cruel
Whan men treden on his tale ne half so feH
As a wo*m*man is whan she haþ kauȝt' an Ire
Vengeaunce is þan al þat' þei desire 2004
Ire is an synne oon þe grete of seucne
Abhominable vnto god in heuene
And to hym self it' is distruccioñ
Thus euery lewde vicar or p*ar*soñ 2008
Can seie how Ire engendres homic[id]e
Ire is in soþ execut*our* of pride
I coude of Ire seie so mochel sorowe
My tale shuld' last' vnto to-morowe 2012
And þerfore I prei god boþ day *and* nyȝt'
An yrous man god sent' hy*m* litel myȝt'
It is grete harme and eke gret' pite
To sette an yrous man in hie degre 2016
¶ Whilom þer was an yrous potestate
As seiþ senek þat' during' his estate
Vpon a day oute riden knyȝtes twoo
And as fortune wolde it' shuld' be so/ 2020
þat' oon of hem come home þat' o*þer*e nouȝt'
Anoñ þe knyȝt' byfore þe Iuge was brouȝt'
þat' saide þus þou hast' þi felawe sclayñ
ffor which I deme þe to deþ certeyñ 2024

And to an oþer knyȝt' com*m*añded he
Go lede him to deþe I charge þe
And happed as þei went' by þe way
Toward' þe place þer he shuld' day 2028
þe knyȝt' come which̃ men wende had ben dede
þan þouȝt' þei it' was þe best' rede
To lede hem boþ to þe Iuge agayñ
þei seiden lord' þe knyȝt' nys not' slayñ 2032
His felawe here he stant' hool a lyue [leaf 157, back]
He shal be dede quod he so mot' I thryue
þat' is to seyn boþ on two *and* þre
And þoo to þe first' knyȝt' riȝt' þus spoke he 2036
I dampne þe þe most' algate be dede
And þou also most' nedes lese þine hede
ffor þou art' cause of þi felawes deþe
And to þe *thridde*[1] knyȝ*te* þus he seiþe [1 MS iij.] 2040
Thou hast' not' done þat' I co*m*maunded þe
And þus he did hem sleen al þre
¶ Irous Cambises was eke dronkenlewe
And ay delited him to bene a shrewe 2044
And so byfelle a lorde and his mayne
That' loued vertuous moralite
Seide vpon a day bitwix hem two riȝt' þus
A lorde is lost' if he be vicius 2048
And dronkenesse eke is a foule record'
Of eny man and namely in a lord'
þer is wel mony an yre and mony an ere
In waytinge and he note where 2052
ffor goddes [loue] drynkeþ more attemp*er*aly
Wyne makeþ a man to lesen wrecchedly
his mynde and his lymes euerechoñ
þe reuerce shalt' þou see quod he anoñ 2056
And preue it' by þine [owne] exp*er*ience
That' wyne ne doþ to folk noñ such̃ offence
þer nys no wyne byreueþ me my myȝt'
of honde ne of foote ne of myn eye sight' 2060

And for despite he dronke mochel more
An .C. part' þan he had doñ byfore
And riȝt' anon þis yrous cursed wreche
lete þise knyȝtes sones to-fore hy*m* fecche 2064
Comaundyng' hem þei shuld' to-fore hy*m* stonde
And sodeynly he toke his bowe on honde
And vp the strenge he pulled to his ere
And wiþ an arowe he sclowe þ^e^ childe riȝt' þere. 2068
Nowe whe*þ*er' haue I a siker hond' or noñ [leaf 158]
Quod he is al my myȝt' and mynde agoñ
Haþ wyne byreued me myn eye siȝt'
What' shuld' I telle answere of þe knyȝt' 2072
His sone was sclayn þer nys no more to say
Be ware þerfor wiþ lordes howe ȝe play
Syng' Placebo and I shal ȝif I can
But' if it' be to a poor man 2076
To poor man shuld he his vices telle
But not' to a lord' þoughñ he shuld' goo to helle
Lo Irous Arus þilk' Percian
how he distroied þe Ryuer of gysan 2080
ffor þat' an hors of his was dreynt' *þer* Inne
Whan he went' babilonye to wynne
He made þat' þe Ryuer was so smal
þat' as men myȝt' passed ouer al 2084
lo þat' he so wel teche can
Ne be ȝe no felawe to non yrous man
Ne wiþ no woode man þat' walkeþ by þe way
lasse þe repent' I wil no ferþere say 2088
Now Thom*as* leue broþer leue þine Ire
þou shalt' me fynde as Iuste as is a squyere
Hold' not' þe deuels knyf ay in þine h*er*te
Thyne anger doþ þe al to sore smerte 2092
But' shewe it' me al þi confessioñ
Nay quod þe sik man by seint' Symeoñ
I haue be shrive þis day at' my curate
I haue tolde hym alholy myne astate 2096

It' nedeþ no more to speke of it' seid he
But' if me list' of myne hu*m*ilite
ȝeue me þan of ȝoure gold' to make *our* cloister'
Quod he for mony a muscle and mony an oyster' 2100
Whan oþer men han bene ful wel at ese
Haþ bene our fode our' cloister' forto rese
And god wote vnneþ þe foundement'
P*er*fo*u*rmed is and of our payvement 2104
Is nouȝt a tyle wiþ-Inne our' wonys [leaf 158, back]
By god we owen xl pounde for stonys
Now helpe Thomas for hym þat' harowed helle
ffor ellis mote we our bokes selle 2108
And ȝif ȝou lakke our predicacioñ
Than goþ þis world' al to distruccioñ
ffor who so wold' from þis world' vs byreue
So god me saue thomas by ȝoure leue 2112
He wolde byreue out' of þe world' þe sonne
ffor who can techen and worchen as we konne
And þat' is nouȝt' of litel tyme quod he
But siþ Elie was or Elise 2116
Han freres be þat' fynde I of record'
In charite þon-kidde be our' lord'
Now thomas [helpe vs] for seint' charite
Haue done anoñ he sette hy*m* on his kne 2120
This sik man wex nye woode for Ire
He wolde þat' þe frere had be a fire
Wiþ his fals dissimulacioñ
Suchñ þing' as is in my possessioñ 2124
Quoþ he þat' may I ȝeue *and* non oþ*er*e
ȝe sein me thus hou þat' I am ȝour' broþ*er*e
ȝe certes quoþ þis frere trusteþ wel
I toke our dame þe lett*er* of our seel 2128
Nowe quoþ he wel *and* somwhat' shal I ȝeue
Vnto ȝoure holy Couent' while I lyve
And in þine honde þou shalt' it haue anōn
Vp þis condicioñ and oþer noñ 2132

That' þou departe it' so my dere broþ*er*
þat' euery frere haue as moch̃ as oþ*er*
This shalt' þou swere on þi professioñ
Wiþ-outen fraude or cauellacioñ 2136
I swere it' quod þe frere by my faiþ
And þerwiþal his honde in his he laiþ
lo here my feiþ in me shal be no lak'
Now þan put' þine honde do*un* by my bak' 2140
Seide þis man and grope wel behinde [leaf 159]
Byneþ my buttok þer þou shalt' fynde
A þinge þat' I haue hidde in p*r*iuete
A þou3t' þe frere þ*at*' shal go wiþ me 2144
A-doune his honde he launseþ to þe clift
I hope for to fynde þer a 3ift
And whan þis sik man felt' þis frere
About his trwel grope her *and* þere 2148
A myddes his honde he lete þe frere a fart'
þer nys no capel drawing in a cart'
þat my3t han lete a fart' of such̃ a soun
þe frere vp stert' as doþ a [wood] lyo*un* 2152
A fals cherle quod þe frere for goddis bonys
This despite þou hast don*e* for þe nonys
þowe shal aby þis fart' if I may
His mayne þat' harde þis affray 2156
Come lepinge Inne *and* chased out' þe frere
And forþe he goþ w*ith* a ful angry chere
[1] He ne had nat' ellis for his sermoñ [*2159]
To p*ar*ten amonge his breþeren whan he come home [*2160]
And þus is þis tale ydoñ
ffor we were almost' at þe toñ } 2294

¶ **Thus endeþ þe somno*ur*s tale.**

[[1] *Spurious ending in the Petworth MS. For the genuine ending of the Tale, see the Appendix.*]

GROUP E. FRAGMENT VI.

§ 1. THE CLERK'S HEAD-LINK.

PETWORTH MS.

Ande here

bygynneþ þe prologe of þ^e^ clerk^t^ of Oxenford^e^ [*on leaf* 159]

Sir^r^ Clerk^t^ of Oxenford^e^ our^r^ oost^t^ saide ¶ **The prologe :/**
3e ride as stille as Coy as doþ a maide
Were newe spoused sitting^t^ at^t^ þe borde
This day ne herd I of 3oure mouþ a word^e^ 4
I trowe þat^t^ 3e stodye about^t^ som sophyme
But^t^ Salomon seiþ al þinge haþ tyme
ffor goddes sake beþ of better^r^ chere
It^t^ is no tyme nowe to stody here 8
Telle vs some mery tale by 3our^r^ fay
ffor what^t^ man is entred into a play
he nedes mote into þat^t^ play assent^t^
But^t^ pr[e]cheþ not^t^ as freres doñ *in* lent^t^ 12
To make vs for our^r^ olde synnes to wepe [leaf 159, back]
Ne þat^t^ þi tale ne make vs not^t^ to sclepe
Telle vs som*me* mery þing^t^ of auentures
3oure termes. 3oure colours *and* figures 16
kepe hem in store til 3e he*m* endite
hi3e stele as whan men to ky*ngges* write
Spekeþ so pleyn at^t^ þis tyme I 3ou prey
That^t^ we may vnder-stonde what^t^ 3e sey 20
This worþi clerk^t^ benygnely answered
Hoost^t^ quod he I am vndere 3our^r^ 3eerde
3e han as nowe of vs þe gouern*aunce*
And þerfor wil I do 3ou obeysaunce 24

GROUP E. § 1. CLERK'S HEAD-LINK. **Petworth MS.**

As fer as reson askeþ hardely
I wil ȝou tel a tale whicħ þat I
lerned at' Padowe of a worþi clerke
As preued by his wordys and his werk' 28
He is nowe dede and nailed in his chest'
I prei to god so send his soule good rest'
ffraunceys Petrak þe laureol poete
Hight/ þis clerke whoos retorike swete 32
Enlumyneþ al Itaile þorgħ poetrie
As lynyan did of Philosophye
Or lawe or oþer art' particulere
But' deþe þat' nyl suffre no þing' here 36
But' as it' were a twynkelinge of an ye
Boþ haþ he slayn and al shal we dye.
But' forto tellen of þis worþi man
þat' tauȝt' me þis tale as I first' bygan 40
I sey þat' he first' wiþ hygħ steel enditeþ
Or he þe body of his tale writeþ
A procheyn in þe which disseuereþ he
þe Mounde and of Saluse þe contree 44
And spekeþ of Appenyn þe hilles hye
þat' ben þe bondes of west lumbardye
And of Mount' Resulus in special
Wher as þe Poo out' of a welle smal 48
Takeþ his furst' sprynggingе *and* his sours [leaf 160]
Wher as he holt' euen streiȝt' way his cours
To Emel ward' to ferrare *and* to venyse
The whicħ a longe þinge were to devise 52
And trewely as to my Iugement'
Mee thenkeþ it' a þing' inpertinent'
Saue he wil conuey his matere
But' þis is þe tale whicħ þat' ȝe shal here 56
¶ **Thus endeþe þe prologe of þis tale·**

And here bygynneþ þe clerk his tale [on leaf 160]

Ther is at þe west side of ytayle ¶ The tale :/
Doune at þe rote of vesulus þe cold
A lusty pleyn abundant of vitaile
wher mony a toune & tour[1] þou maist bihold [[1] & tour *interlined by perhaps a later hand*]
þat founded were in tyme of elders olde
And mony anoþer delectable siȝt
And saluce þis noble cuntre hiȝt 63

A Marquis whilom [lord] was in þat lond 64
As were his worþi elders hy*m* bifore
And Obeisaunt and redy to his hond
Were alle his leeges boþ lasse *and* more 67
þus in delite he lyued and haþ do ȝore
Be-loued and drad þourgh fauo*ur* of fortune
Boþ of his lordys *and* of his comune 70

Therwiþ he was as to speke of lynage 71
The gentelest y-born of al lumbardy
A faire p*er*sone. stronge and ȝenge of age
And ful of honure and curteisie 74
Discrete ynouȝe his cuntrey forto gye
Saue in some þingges he was to blame
And Water was þis yonge lordes name 77

I blame him þus þ*a*t he considered nouȝt 78
In tyme co*m*mynge what myȝt betide
But on his lust present was al his þouȝt [leaf 160, back]
And forto hauke and hunte on euery side 81
Wel nye al oþer cures lete he slide
And eke he ne wold þat was worst of all
Wedde no wif for ouȝt þat myȝt byfall 84

Only þat' pointe his puple bere so sore 85
þat' flok-mele on a day þei [to him] went'
And oon of hem þat' wisest' was of lore
Or ellis þat' þe lorde wold best' assent' 88
þat' he shulde telle hy*m* what' his puple ment'
Or ellis coude he wel shewe suc̄h matere
He to þe Marquis seide as ȝe mowe here 91

(6)

O Noble Marquis ȝoure hu*ma*nitee 92
Assureþ vs *and* ȝeueth vs hardynesse
As ofte tyme as it' is necessite
That' we ȝou mow telle our' heuynesse 95
Accepteþ lord of ȝour' gentilnesse
þat' we to ȝowe wiþ pitous hert' co*m*pleyn*e*
And lat' ȝoure eeres not' my vois disdeyn*e* 98

(7)

Al haue I nouȝt' to done in þis matere 99
More þan anoþ*er* haþ in þis place
ȝit' for as moche as ȝe my lord so dere
Haue alway shewed [me] fauour *and* grace 102
I dare þe better aske of ȝou a space
Of audience to shewen our request'
And ȝe my lord' to done riȝt' as ȝou lest' 105

(8)

For certes lord so wel vs likeþ ȝou 106
And alle ȝoure werkes *and* euer han do þ*a*t we
Ne cowde nat our owne silf devisen howe
We myȝt' more lyve in felicite 109
Saue oo þinge lord if it' ȝo*ur* wille be
That' to be a wedded man if ȝou list'
Than were our' puple in souereyn h*er*tes rest' [leaf 161] 112

(9)

Boweþ ȝoure nek' vndere þat' blisful ȝok' 113
Of souereynte nouȝt' of se*r*uise
Which̄ men clepe spousale or wedlok'
And þenkeþ lord among' ȝoure þouȝtes wise 116

That of wedloke co*m*me þ grete emp*r*ise
ffor þouȝe we slepe or wake ro*nn*e or ride
Ay flee þ þe tyme it' wil no man abide. 119

(10)

And þouȝe ȝour' grene ȝouþe growe as ȝit' 120
In crepe þ age alway as stille as stone
And de þe manase þ euery age and smyt'
In eche astate for þer ascape þ noon 123
And also certeyn as we knowe eu*er*ichoñ
þat' we shul dye as vncerteyn we alł
Beñ of þat' day þat' de þ shal on vs falle 126

(11)

Accepteth þan of vs þe trewe entent' 127
That' neu*er*e ȝit' refused your heest'
And we wil al lord ȝif ȝe wil assent'
Chese ȝou a wif' in short' tyme at' the lest' 130
Born of þe gentelest' *and* of þe mest'
Of al þis londe so þat' it' out' seme
Honure to god *and* ȝou. so as we con deme 133

(12)

Delyuere vs of al þis bysy drede 134
And take a wif' for hiȝe goddis sake
ffor ȝif it' byfelle so as god forbede
þat' þourgh de þ ȝ*our* lynage shuld sclake 137
And a straunge lynage shuld take
ȝour' heritage. oo woo were vs alyue
Wherfore we prey ȝou hastely to wif 140

(13)

Her meke preier' & her pitous chere 141
Made þ^e Marquis haue such pite
Wil ȝe quod he myne owne puple dere [leaf 161, back]
To þat' I neuer erst' þouȝt' constreyne me 144
I me reioyse not' of my liberte
þat' seelden tyme is found in mariage
Ther I was free I mot' bene in s*er*uage 147

But' naþelees I se ȝoure trewe entent' 148
And trust' vpon ȝou and haue doñ ay
Wherfore of my fre wille I assent'
To wedde me as sone as euer I may 151
But *þer* as ȝe han profered me to day
To chese me a wif I ȝou relese
That' chois ! & prei ȝou of *ȝour pro*pher cese 154

(15)

For god it' wote *þat'* children oft' beñ 155
Vnlike her worþi eldres he*m* bifore
Bounte co*mm*eþ al of god not' of þ^e^ strene
Of whicħ þei ben engendred and ybore 158
I Trust' in goddys bounte *and* þe*r*fore
My mariage and my astate *and* rest'
I hym bitake he may do as hy*m* lest' 161

(16)

Lat' me allon*e* in chesing' of my wiff 162
That' charge vpon my bak' I wil endure
But' I ȝou prey and charge vpon *ȝour* lif'
þat' wif *þat* I take ȝe me ensure 165
To worship hur' whil our' lyf endure
In worde and werke boþ here and ellys where
As she an emp*er*ours douȝter were 168

(17)

And ferþermore þis shullen ȝe swere *þat* ȝe 169
Aȝeinst' my chose shul nei*þer* grucche ne stryue
ffor siþ I shal forgo my liberte
At' ȝoure request' as euer mot' I thryue 172
Ther as myn hert' is sette *þer* wil I wyue
And but' ȝe wollen assent' in suchħ manere
I prey ȝou spekeþ no more of þis matere [leaf 162] 175

(18)

Wiþ harty wille þei sweren and assenten 176
To al þis þinge þer seide no wiȝt' nay
Bisechinge hym of grace er þei wenten
That' he hem wold' *gra*unten a certeyn day 179

Of his spousale as sone as euer he may
ffor ȝit' alway þe puple somwhat' dredde
Lesse þis Marquis wol no wif wedde 182

He g*r*aunted hem a day such as hy*m* lest' 183
On which he wolde be wedded sikerly
And seide he did al þis at' her request'
And þei wiþ humble entent' ful buxomly 186
Knelinge vpon her knees ful reuerently
Hym þonken alle and þus þei han an ende
Of her entent' and home aȝein þei wende 189

And here vpon he toke his officers 190
Co*m*maundinge for þe fest' to p*u*rucye
And to his p*r*ivey kny*ȝ*tes and sqwiers
Such charge ȝaf hem . as hy*m* lust' on he*m* to leye 193
And þei his comaundementz to obeye
And ech of hem doþ his diligence
To done vnto þe fest reuerence 196

[*PART THE SECOND.*]

Nouȝt' fer from þilk' place honurable 197
wher as þis Marquis shope his mariage
þer stoode a Throp of siȝt' delectable
In which poor folk' of þat' vilage 200
Hadden her beestes and her harbigage
And of her labour toke her sustin*au*nce
After þe erþe hem ȝaue abundaunce 203

Among' þise poor folk þer dwelled a man 204
which þat' was holden porest' of he*m* all
But' hegh god somtyme sende can [leaf 162, back]
His grace vnto a litel oxes stall 207
Ianicula men of þat' throp hy*m* calle
A doughter' had he faire *and* ȝong' of siȝt'
And Grisild' þis ȝonge maiden hiȝt' 210

But forto speke of vertuous bewte 211
þan was she oon þe fairest vnder sonne
fful poorly yfostred was she
No licorousnesse was on her lust yronne 214
Wel ofter of þe weH þan of þe tunne
She drank / *and* for she wole vertue plese
She knewe wel labour but noñ ydel ese 217

(24)

But þouȝe þis maide were tender of age 218
ȝit in þe brest of her virginite
þere was enclosed ripe *and* sad corage
And in grete reuerence *and* in grete charite 221
Her olde poor fadere fostred shee
A fewe shepe spynnyng on þe felde she kept
She wolde not ben ydel til she sclepte 224

(25)

And whan she homward come she wolde bringe 225
wortes and herbes tymes ful oft
whicH she shradde *and* siþ for her lyuyng
And made her bedde ful hard *and* no þing soft 228
And euere she kept her faders lif on loft
wiþ euery obeisaunce *and* diligence
That childe may do to faders reuerence 231

(26)

Vppon Grisilde þe poor creature 232
fful oft haþ Marquis sette hys eye
As he on hundyinge rode perauenture
And whan it felle þat he myȝt hir espye 235
he not wiþ wa[n]toñ lokinge of foly
his eyen cast vpon hur but in sad wise
Vpon her chere he wold hym oft avise [leaf 163] 238

(27)

Commending in his hert her wommanhede 239
And eke her vertue passing eny wiȝt
Of so ȝonge age as wel in chere as in dede
ffor þouȝe þe puple haue no gret insiȝt 242

In vertue he considered ful riȝt
Her bewte and disposed þat he wold
Hir wedde if euer he wedde shuld 245

(28)

The day of weddyng come but no wiȝt can 246
Telle what wo*m*man it shuld be
ffor which *mer*vaile wondred mony man
And seiden whan þei weren in p*r*iuete 249
wil not our lorde leue his vanyte
wil he not wedde alas alas þe while
whi wil he hy*m* self *and* vs þus begile 252

(29)

But na-þe-lees þis marquis haþ do make 253
Of Gemmes sette in gold *and* in asure
Broches and ryngges for grisild sake
And of her cloþing toke he þe mesure 256
Of a maide like to her stature
And eke of oþer ornamentes all
þat to such a wedding shul fall 259

(30)

The tyme of vndern þe same day 260
Approcheþ þat þis wedding shul*de* be
And all þe paleys putt was in aray
Both halle *and* chambres ech in his degre 263
Houses of office. stuffed wiþ grete plente
þer maist þou see of deynteuous vitaile
þat may be found as fer as lasteþ ytaile 266

(31)

This rial Marquis rially araied. 267
lordys and ladys in his companye
þe which to þe feest were preied / [leaf 163, back]
And of his retenwe þe bachelerye 270
wiþ mony a soune of sondry melodye
vnto þe vilage [of þe] which I told
In þis aray þe riȝ*te* way haþ hold 273

Griseldꝑ god wote of þis ful Innocentꝑ 274
þatꝑ for hure was shape al þis aray
To fecchen watere at þe welle is wentꝑ
And commeþ home as sone as euer she may 277
ffor wel she herd say þatꝑ ilkꝑ day
þatꝑ Marquis shuldꝑ wedde *and* if she myȝtꝑ
She woldꝑ fayn see somme of þatꝑ siȝtꝑ 280

(33)

She þouȝtꝑ I wil wiþ oþer maidens stondꝑ 281
þatꝑ bene my felawes in oure door *and* see
The Marquis and þerfor wil I fonde
To done atꝑ home as sone as itꝑ may be 284
þe laboure whicħ þatꝑ longeþ vnto me
And þan may I atꝑ leisere itꝑ byholdꝑ
If she þis way to þe castel holde 287

(34)

And as she wolde ouerꝑ þe thresholdꝑ goñ 288
The Marquis come and can hurꝑ forto calle
And she sette doune her water potꝑ anoñ
beside þe thresholdꝑ of þe oxes stalle 291
And doun vpon her knees she gan to falle
And wiþ sadde countenaunce kneled stille
Til she had herde whatꝑ was þe lordes wille 294

(35)

This þouȝtful Marquys spake vnto þis maide 295
wel soberly and seide in þis manere
where is ȝoure fader Griseldꝑ he seide
And she wiþ reuerence and meke chere 298
Answered lord he is al redy here
And Inne she gooþ wiþ-outꝑ lenger lette
And to þe Marquis she her fadere fette. [leaf 164] 301

(36)

He by þe honde þan toke þis olde man 302
And seide him þus whan he hym had a side
Ianicula I neiþer may ne can
lenger þe plesaunce of myn herte hide 305

If þat' ȝe vouchesauf what' so be-tide
þi douȝter wil I take er þat' I wende
As for my wif to my lyues end 308

(37)

Thow louest' me I woot' wel certeyñ 309
And art' my feiþ-ful liege man ybore
And al þat' likeþ me I dar wel seyñ
It' likeþ þe and specialy þerfore 312
Tel me þat' poynt' þat' I haue seide byfore
If þat' þowe wolde vnto þat' purpoos drawe
To take me as for þine sone in lawe 315

(38)

The sodeyn caas þe man astonyed soo / 316
þat' rede he wexe al basshed and al quakinge
He stood *and* vnneþes seide wordes moo
But' only þus lord quod he my willinge 319
Is as ȝe wol not' aȝeinst' ȝour' likinge
I wil no þinge ȝe be my lorde so dere
Riȝt' as ȝou lest' gouerneþ þis matere 322

(39)

Than wil I do þus quod Marquis softly 323
þat in to þe chambre I and þou. *and* she
haue a collacioñ and woost' þou why
ffor I wil aske hur' ȝif hir' wil be 326
To be my wif and rewle hir' after me
And al þis she shal done in þi presence
I wil not' speke out' of þine audience 329

(40)

And in þe Chambere while þei were aboute 330
Her tretis whicħ ȝe shul after here
þe puple come into þe hous without e
And wondred hem in howe honest' manere [leaf 164, back] 333
And tentifly she kepte hur fadere dere
But' vtterly grisild wonder myȝt'
ffor neuere erst' sey she shuch a siȝt' 336

No wonder is þouȝe she be astonyed 337
To se so grete a gest' come in þat' place
She was neuere to suche gestys wonned
ffor which she loked wiþ ful pale face 340
But' shortly fro þis matere forto pace
Thise were þe wordes þat' þis marquis saide
To þis benygne verrey feiþful mayde 343

(42)

Grisyle he seide ȝe wol wel vnderstonde 344
It' likeþ vnto ȝoure fadere *and* me
þat' I ȝou wedde *and* eke it' may so stonde
As I suppose þat' ȝe wil it' so be 347
But' þis demaunde I axe furst' q*uod* he
That' siþen it' shal be don on hastif wise
Wol ȝe assent' or ellis ȝowe avise 350

(43)

I seye þis be ȝe redy w*ith* good hert' 351
To al my lust' *and* þat' I frely may
As me best' þenkeþ do ȝou lawgh or smert
And ȝe neuer gruch nyȝt' ne day 354
And eke whan I seie ȝe say ȝe not' nay
Neiþer be word ne fraward co*un*tenance
Swere þis and here I swere *our* aliañce 357

(44)

WOndringe vpon þis worde quaking' for drede 358
She seide Indigne and vnworþi
Am I to þat' [honour] þat' ȝe me bede
But' riȝt' as ye wil ȝ*our* self riȝt' so wil I 361
And [here] I swere þat' neuer willingly
In word ne þouȝt' I neuere ȝou disobeye
ffor to be dede þouȝe me were loþe to deye 364

(45)

This is ynowe Grisile myn quod he [leaf 165] 365
And forþ he goþ wiþ a sobre chere
Out' at þe door after cam she
And to þe puple he seide in þis manere 368

This is my wif quod he þat' stondeþ here
Honoureþ hir' and loueth [hire] I prey
Who so loueþ me þer nys no more to seye 371

(46)

And for no þing' of hure olde gere 372
She shuld bring' to his hous he bade
þat' wo*m*men shulden spulen hir' riȝt' þere
Of which þe ladies were not' riȝt' glade 375
To handel her cloþes in which she was clad
But' naþeles þis maiden briȝt' of hwe
ffrom fote to hede ycloþed han al newe 378

(47)

Her heres han þei kembed þat' lay vntressed 379
wel rwdely with her fyngeres smale
And a crowne on her hede þei han dressed
Isette ful of owches grete and smal 382
Of hir' aray what' shuld I make a tale
Vnneþes þe puple hir' knewe for her fairnesse
Whan she transformed was in such richesse 385

(48)

¶ This Marquis haþ hure spoused wiþ a rynge 386
Bouȝt' for þe same cause an þan hir' sette
vppon an hors snowe white and wel amblynge
And to his palaies er he lenger lette 389
Wiþ Ioiful puple þat' he lad *and* mette
Conveied hir' and þus þe day þei spende
In reuel to þe sonne canne descende 392

(49)

And shortely forþ þis tale forto chace 393
I sey þat' to þis newe Marquissesse
God haþ ysent' such favour of his *grace*
þat' it' semed not' as by liknesse 396
That' she was born and fedde in rudenesse [leaf 165, back]
As in a Cote ar in an oxes stalle
But' norshed in an Emp*er*ours halle 399

To euery wiȝt she woxen is so dere 400
And worshipful þat folk þer she was bore
And from her birth knewe her fro ȝere to ȝere
Vnneþ trowed þei but durst haue swore 403
þat to Ianicle of which I speke byfore
She douȝtere ne were for as by coniecture
hem þouȝt she was a noþer creature 406

(51)

ffor [þouȝe] þat euere vertuous was she 407
She was encresed in such excellence
Of thewe sette in high bounte
And so discrete and faire of eloquence 410
So benygne and digne of reuerence
And coude þe puples *her*tes so enbrace
þat ech her loued þat loked on her face 413

(52)

Nouȝt only of saluce in þe toun 414
Publisshed was þe bounte of her name
And eke be-side in mony a regio*un*
If oon seide wel ano*þer* seide þe same 417
So spradde of hure bounte þe fame
That men and wo*m*men boþ ȝonge *and* olde
Goon to saluse hur to be-holde 420

(53)

This walt*er*. lowly nay but ryally 421
weddeþ wiþ fortune honeste
In goddes pees lyuen wel esely
At hoom and outward grace ynoȝe had he 424
And for he sawe vnder lowe degre
was oft vertue hid þe puple hy*m* helde
A prudent man and þat is sene wel selde 427

(54)

Nouȝt only Grisile þus þorgh her witte 428
Couþe al þe fete of wively humblenesse [lea^166]
But eke whan þe cas required it
The comon profite coude she redresse 431

Ther nas no discord rancour ne heuynesse
In al þe londe þat she ne coude it cese
And bring hem al wisely in rest *and* ese 434

Though þat hur husbond present were anoñ 435
ȝif Gentil men or oþer of her contre
were wrooþ she cowde bringe hem at oñ
So wise and rype wordes had she 438
And Iuggement of so grete equite
That she fro heuene was as men wende[1] [[1] *this line is repeated in the MS.*]
Puple to saue and euery wrong tamende 441

Not longe tyme aftere þat þis grisild 442
Was wedded she a douȝter haþ ybore
Al had she leuer born a knaue child
Glad was þe Marquis *and* his folk *per*fore 445
ffor þouȝe a mayde childe come al byfore
She may to a knaue childe atteyne
By liklihede siþens she is not bareyne 448

[*THE THIRD PART.*]

Therfor as it falleþ tymes moo 449
That þis childe haþ sowked but a thrawe
This marquis in his hert longeþ so
To tempte his wif her sadnesse to knowe 452
þat he ne myȝt fro his hert throwe
þis merveilous desire his wif tassay
Naþe-lees god wote he þouȝt hir to affray 455

He had assaied hir ynouȝe to-fore 456
And fonde hur euer good what nedeþ It
Hir forto torment and alway more *and* more
þouȝe somme preise it for a subtile witte 459
But as for me I saie þat euel it sitte [leaf 166, back]
To assaie a wif whan it is no nede
And putten hure in angwissh *and* in drede 462

For which̄ þis Marquis wrouȝt in þis ma[ne]re 463
He came a nyght alon þer as she lay
wiþ steerne face and trouble chere
And seide þoo Griseld quoþ he þat day 466
þat I ȝou toke out of ȝoure poor aray
And putte ȝou in estate of hie noblesse
ȝe han not ȝit forȝeten as I gesse 469

(60)

I seye Griseld þis present dignite 470
In which̄ I haue put ȝou as I trowe
Makeþ not ȝou forȝetful forto be
þat I ȝou toke in poor estate ful lowe 473
ffor eny þinge ȝe mote ȝoure seluen knowe
Take hede of euery word þat I ȝou seie
ther is no wiȝt þat hereþ þis but we tweye 476

(61)

ȝe wote ȝ*our* self wele howe þat ȝe come here 477
Into þis hous it is not long ago
And þouȝe to me ȝe be leef *and* dere
vnto my gentiles ȝe be no þing so 480
þei seyn to hem it is grete shame *and* woo
fforto be sogette and in seruage
To þe þat art born of so lowe lynage 483

(62)

And namely siþ þi douȝter was bore 484
þise wordes han þei spoke doutlees
But I desire as I haue don byfore
To lyve my lif wiþ hem in rest *and* pees 487
I may not in þis cas bene rechelees
I most doñ wiþ [þi] douȝtere for þe best
nouȝt as I wold but as my gentils lest 490

(63)

And ȝit god woot þis is ful loþ to me 491
But naþeles wiþ outen ȝ*our* wetynge [leaf 167]
I nyl not doo but þis I wil quod he
þat ȝe to me assent as in þis þinge 494

Shewep now ȝoure pacience *in ȝour* worchinge
That ȝe me byhiȝt *and* swore in ȝour vilage
That day pat maked was our mariage 497

(64)

Whan she had herde al pis she was not amoued 498
Neiper in word or chere or counten*aun*ce
ffor as it semed she was not agreued
She seid lorde al lith in ȝoure plesa*un*ce 501
My childe and I wip hertely obeisance
Bene ȝoures all *and* ȝe may saue *and* spille
ȝoure owne ping wheder pat ȝe wille 504

(65)

Ther may no pinge so god my saule saue 505
likinge to ȝou pat may displese me
Ne I desire no pinge to haue
Ne drede to lese saue only ȝe 508
This wille is my hert *and* ay shal be
No length of tyme or dep it may deface
Neipe chaunge my corage into o*per* place 511

(66)

Glad was pe Marquis of hur answering 512
But ȝit he feyned as he were not so.
Al drery was his chere *and* his lokinge
whan she shuld out of pe chamber goo 515
Sone after pis a forlong way or twoo
he pleynly hap told his entent
Vnto a man which he to his wif sent 518

(67)

A maner *ser*geaunt was pis *pr*ivey man 519
pe which pat feithful fond yhad
In pingges grete *and* eke such folk wel can
Don execucion of pingges bad 522
pe lord knewe wel p*at* he hy*m* loued *and* drad.
And whan pis sergea*un*t wist his lordes will [leaf 167, back]
Into pe chambere he stalked hy*m* ful still 525

Madame he seide ȝe mote forȝeue it' me 526
þough I do þinge to which I am constreyned /
ȝe bene so wise þat' wel knowe ȝe
þat' lordes heestes may not' be feyned 529
þei mowen wel be wailed or compleyned
But' men mote nede vnto her lust' obeye
And so wil I þer nys no more to seye 532

(69)

That' childe I am commaunded to take 533
And spake no more but' out' þ^e child he hent
Despitously and gan a chere make
As he wold' han slayn it' þer he went' 536
Griseld' mot' al suffre and al consent'
And as a lombe she sitteþ meke *and* stille
And lete þis cruel Seriaunt' haue his wille 539

(70)

Suspecte was þe name of þis man 540
Suspecte his face. suspecte his world' also
Suspecte þe tyme þat' he þis bygan/
ffor his douȝter þat' she loued soo 543
She wende he wold' haue slayn it' riȝt' þoo
But' naþelees she neiþer wepte ne seide
Confeermyng' hur' to þat' þe Marquis seide 546

(71)

And at' þe last' speke she bygan 547
And nekely to þe sergeant' preide
So as he was a worþi gentil man
þat' she myȝt' kisse her childe er *þat'* it deide 550
And in her barme þis litel childe she leide
wiþ ful sadde face and gan þe childe to blisse
And lulled it' and after gan it' kisse 553

(72)

And þus she seide in her benigne voys 554
fare wele my child' I shal þe neu*e*re see
But' siþ I haue Marked þe wiþ croys
Of þilk' fadere yblessed mot' þou be [leaf 168] 557

þat' for vs deyed vpon þe rood tre.
þi soule litel childe I hym bytake
ffor þis nyȝt' shalt þou dyen for my sake 560

(73)

I trowe þat' to a norice in þis caas / 561
It' had ben hard' þis rewþe forto see
Wel myȝt' a modere þan cry alas /
But' naþeles so sadde *and* stedfast' was she 564
þat' she endured al hur' aduersite
And to þe Sergeant' meke she seide
Haue here aȝein my litel ȝonge maide 567

(74)

And goþ now quod she *and* doþ my lordes heest' 568
And oon þinge wold' I prei of ȝoure grace
That' but' my lorde forbede ȝou at' lest'
Burieþ þis litel body in som place 571
þat no beestes no briddes it' to-race
But' he no word' to þo purpoos wold' saye
But' toke þe childe *and* went' vpon his way 574

(75)

This Sergeañt' come to þe lord' ageyñ 575
And of Griseldes wordes *and* of her chere
He tolde hym poynt' by poynt' *in* short *and* pleyñ
And hym presented wiþ his douȝter dere 578
Somwhat' þis lord' had rawþe *in* his manere
But naþelees his purpoos helde he stille
As lordes doñ whan þei wil han her wille 581

(76)

And bad þis Sergeant' ful priveily 582
he shuld ful soft' þis child' welde *and* wrappe
with al þe circumstance tenderly
And carie it' in a coffre or in a lappe 585
But' vp peyn his hede of for to swappe
þat' no man shuld' knowe of his entent'
Ne whens he come ne whidere he went' 588

¶ But' at' Boloyne to his suster' dere [leaf 168, back] 589
þat' þoo of Pavie was countesse
He shuld her take *and* shew hir' þis matere
Bisechinge hure to doñ her bysynesse 592
This childe to fostere in al gladnesse
And whoos childe þat' it' was he bad hir' hide
ffrom euery wiȝt' for ouȝt' þat' myȝt' betide 595

This Sergeaunt' goþ and haþ fulfilled þis þinge 596
But' to þis marquis nowe retourne we
ffor nowe goþ he wel oft' ymagynynge
If by his wif' [chere] he myght' See 599
And by hir wordes perceyue þat' she
Were chaunged but' he coude neuere fynde.
But' euere in oon ylik' sad *and* kinde 602

As glad as humble as bysy in seruise 603
and Eke in loue as she was wont' to be
Was she to hym in euery manere wise
Ne of her douȝter' oon worde speke she 606
Noon accident' for noon aduersite
Was seen in hir' ne neuere her douȝter' name
Nempned she for ernest' ne for game 609

[*THE FOURTH PART.*]

In þis estate passed ben foure ȝere 610
Er she wiþ childe was but' as god wolde
A knaue childe she bere by þis waltere
fful gracious *and* faire to biholde 613
And whan folk' it' to hir fadere tolde
Not' oonly he But' al þe contree mery
Was for þe childe *and* god þei ponke *and* herye 616

Whan it' was two ȝere olde *and* from þe brest' 617
Departed from his norce vpon a day
þis Marquis kaught' ȝit' anoth[er] lest'

To tempten his wif' ofter if he may 620
O nedeles was she tempted in assay [leaf 169]
But' wedded men knowen no mesure
Whan þei fynde a pacient' creature 623

(82)

Wyf quod þis Marquis ȝe herd' er þis 624
My puple sekely bereþ our mariage
And namely siþen my sone born is
Now it' is wors þan euer in our age 627
þe m*ur*mur sleeþ myn. her[te] and my corage
ffor to myn eres comeþ þe vois so smerte
þat' it' wel nye destroieþ al my herte 630

(83)

Now seye men þus · whan walt*er* is a goon. 631
þan shal þe blood of Ianicle succede
And bene our lord' for oþer haue we nōn
Suchī wordes seyn my puple it' is no drede 634
Wel ouȝte I of suchī m*ur*mur taken hede
ffor certeynly I drede suchī sentence
þouȝe þei not' pleynly speke in myn audience 637

(84)

I wold lyue in pees if þat I myȝt' 638
Wherfore I am disposed vtterly
As I his sustere serued by nyȝt'
Riȝt' so I þenke to serue hy*m* prively 641
þ*us* warne I ȝou þat' ȝe not' sodeynly
Out' of ȝoure self for no woo shuld' outray
Beþ patient' and þerof I ȝou pray 644

(85)

I haue quod she seide [þus] and euere shall 645
I wil desire no þing' certeyī
But' as ȝou lust' not' greueth me at all
þouȝe þat' my douȝtere *and* my sone be sclayī 648
At' ȝoure comaundement' þis is to sayī
I haue had no parte of children tweyī
But' furst' siknesse and after' woo *and* peyī 651

ȝe be our lord doo *with* ȝour owe þinge. 652
Riȝt as ȝou lust and askeþ no rede of me [leaf 169, back]
ffor as I left at home al my cloþinge
whan I come first to ȝou riȝt so quod she 655
left I my wiłł and al my liberte
And toke ȝoure cloþing wherfore I ȝou prey
Do ȝoure wille I wille to it obeye 658

(87)

And certes ȝif I had prescience 659
ȝoure wiłł to knowe. or ȝe ȝoure lust me told
I wold it done wiþ oute necligence
But now I wote ȝoure lust *and* what ȝe wolde 662
Al ȝoure plesaunce feerme *and* stable I hold
ffor wist I þat my deþ wold do ȝou ese
Gladly wil I suffre it ȝou to plese 665

(88)

Deth may make non comp*a*riso*u*n 666
Vnto ȝoure loue and whan þis Marquis say
þe constance of his wiff he cast his hede ado*u*n
And his eyen two and wondred how she may 669
In such pen*au*nce suffre al þis array
And forþ he goþ wiþ drery co*u*ntenance
But to his hert it was ful grete plesannce / 672

(89)

This ege sergeant in þe same wise 673
þat he her douȝtere kaught riȝt so he
Or wors if he coude wors devise
Haþ kaught hire childe þat was ful of bewte 676
And euere in oon so pacient was she
þat she no chere made of hevynesse
But kiseþ her sone and after can hy*m* blesse 679

(90)

Saue þis she preide him if þat he myȝt 680
hir litel sone he wold on erþe graue
his tendere ly*m*mes delicat to siȝt
firo fowles *and* beestes forto saue 683

But' she noon answere of hy*m* my3t' haue
He went' his way as he no þing' wrou3t' [leaf 170]
But' into boloyne tendrely it' brou3t' 686

(91)

This Marquis wondreþ eu*ere* lenger þe more 687
Vpon her pacience *and* if þat' he
Ne had soþly knowe þerfore
þat' p*ar*fitly her children loued she 690
He wold haue wende þat' of some sotilte
And of malice or cruel corage
That' she had suffred þis w*ith* sad visage 693

(92)

Wut' he knewe þat' next' hy*m* self certayñ 694
She loued her children best' in euery wise
But' nowe of wo*m*men wold' I aske fayñ
3if þise assaies my3t' not' suffise 697
what' cowde a stordy husbond' [more] devise
To preue her wifhode *and* her stedfastnesse
And be contynuyng' in stordynesse 700

(93)

But' þer ben folk of such condicioñ 701
þat' whan þei han a certeyn p*ur*poos take
þey con not' stinte of her entencioñ
But' as þei were bounden to a stake 704
þei wil not' of þat' p*ur*poos sclake
Ri3t' so þis marquis haþ fully p*ur*posed
To tempten his wif as he was first' disposed 707

(94)

He waiteþ if by woordes or countenance 708
3if she to hym was chaunged of corage
But' neuere coude he fynde variance
She was euere in hert' & in visage 711
And euer þe ferþer þat' he was i*n* age
þe more trewer if it' were possible
She was to hy*m* in loue *and* more penyble 714

For which it semeþ *þus* *þat* of he*m* twoo 715
Ther was but oon wiH for as walt*er* lust
The same lust was her plesaunce also [leaf 170, back]
And god be ponked al felle for þe best 718
She shewed wel for no worldly vnrest
A wif as of her self no þinge shuld
Willen in effecte but as her husbond wold 721

(96)

The sclaundere of waltere oft wide sprad 722
That a cruel hert wickedly
ffor he a poor wo*m*man wedded had.
Haþ morþered boþ his children p*r*iuely 725
which murm*ur* was amonge heme comonly
No wonder was for to þe puples eere
þer come no worde but *þat* þei m*ur*þered were 728

(97)

For swich as of his puple *þer*bifore 729
had loued hy*m* wel desclaundred of his name
Made hem *þat* þei hated hy*m* therfore
To bene a murdrere is an hatful name 732
But naþelees for ernest ne for game
He of his cruelte wold not stynte
To tempte his wif was al his entente 735

(98)

Whan þis douȝtere xij ȝere was of age 736
he to þe courte of Rome in sotile wise
Enformed of his wille sent his massage
Comaunding hem such billes to devise 739
As to his cruel p*u*rpoos may suffise
howe *þat* þe pope for his puples rest
Bad hym wedde anoþer wif if *þat* hy*m* lest 742

(99)

I sey he bad *þat* þei shuld counte*r*fete 743
þe popes billes making mencioñ
þat he haþ leue his first wif to lete
As by þe popes dispensacioñ 746

To stint*e* rancoure *and* dissencioñ
Bitwix þe puple *and* hy*m* þus speke þe bulle
The which þei han publissshed at' þe fulle [leaf 171] 749

(100)

The rude puple as no wonder is 750
Wende ful wel it' had be riȝt' soo
But' þise tydyngges co*m*men to griseld' is
I deme þat' her hert' was ful woo 753
But' she was ylike sad euermoo
Disposed was þis humble creat*ure*/
þe aduersite of fortune al to endure 756

(101)

Abydinge euer his lust' *and* his plesance 757
To whom she was ȝeuene hert' *and* all
As to her worldely suffisaunce
ffor certeynly for his story telle I shall 760
This Marquis ywriten haþ i*n* speciall
A *lett*re in which he shewe þ his entent'
And sikerly he it' to boloyne sent' 763

(102)

To þe Erle of Pavie which þ*at* he had so, 764
wedded his sustere he preide specialy
To bringen him aȝein his children two
In honurable estaat' al openly 767
Bot' of on þing' he hym preide al vtt*er*ly
That' he to [no] wiȝt' þoughñ men wold' enquere
Shuld not' telle whoos children þei were 770

(103)

But' seide þ*at*' þe mayde shuld' wedded be 771
Vnto þe Marquis of Saluce anoñ
And as þe erle was preide so did he
ffor at' a day Isette he on his way is goñ 774
Toward' Saluse *and* lordes mony oñ
In riche aray þis maide forto gyde
Hir' yonge broþer ridyng' by hir' side 777

Araied was towardes þis mariage 778
This mayde fresshī ful of ge*m*mys clere
Hir broþer that vij. ȝere was of age.
Araied eke was fresshly on his manere [leaf 171, back] 781
And in grete noblesse *and* glad chere
Toward Saluce shapinge her io*ur*nay
ffrom day to day þei riden forþ her way 784

[*THE FIFTH PART.*]

Amonge al þis aftere his wikked vsage 785
This Marquys ȝit his wif to tempten more
To þe vttrest preef of his corage
ffully to haue exp*er*ience *and* lore 788
ȝif þat she were as stedfast as bifore
he on a day in open audience
wel boistously haþ seide hir þis sentence 791

CErtes Griseld I had ynowe plesaunce 792
To han ȝou to my wif for ȝoure goodnesse
And for ȝoure treuthī *and* ȝour obeysaunce
Nouȝt for ȝoure lynage ne for ȝoure ricchesse 795
But it is now knowen in verray soþnesse
þat in grete lordship if I wil avise
Ther is grete souereynte in sondry wise 798

I may not done as euery plowe man may 799
My puple me constreynen forto take
A noþer wiff and crien day by day
And eke þe pope rancour forto sclake 802
Consenteþ it þat dar I vndertake
And trewly þus mochī wil I ȝou say
My newe wif is co*m*myng by þe way 805

Be stronge of hert and voide anoñ her place 806
And þilk dowary þat ȝe brouȝt to me
Take it azein I g*ra*unte it of my g*ra*ce

Retourneþ to ȝoure faders hous quod he 809
No man may alway haue prosperite
wiþ euene hert I rede ȝou to endure
þe stroke of fortune or of auenture 812

(109)

And she aȝein answerde in pacience [leaf 172] 813
My lord quod she I wote and wist alway
howe þat I swore ȝou magnificence
And my pouert no man can ne may 816
Maken noon comparison it is no nay
I helde me neuere digne in no manere
To be ȝoure wif ne ȝit your chambrere 819

(110)

And in þis hous þer ȝe me lady made 820
þe high god take I for my witnesse
So wisly as he my soule glade
I helde me neiþer lady ne maistresse 823
But humble seruaunte to ȝoure worþinesse
And euere shal while my lif may endure
Abouen euery worþi creature 826

(111)

That ȝe so longe of ȝour benygnite 827
haue holde me in honure *and in* nobleye
where I was not worþi forto be
þat þonk I god and ȝou [to] whom I prey 830
ffor-ȝeelde it ȝou þer nys no more to sey
Vnto my fadere gladly wil I wende
And wiþ hym dwelle to my lyves ende 833

(112)

Ther as I was fostred a child ful smal 834
Til I be dede my liff [þer] wil I lede
A widowe clene in hert body *and* al
ffor siþen I ȝaf to ȝou my maydenhede 837
And am ȝoure trewe wif it is no drede
God shild such a lordes wif to take
Anoþer man to husbonde or to make 840

And of ȝour' newe wif god of his g*rac*e 841
So g*ra*unte ȝou welþe and prosp*er*ite
ffor I wil gladly ȝeeld' hir' my place
In which I was blisful wont' to be 844
ffor Siþen it' likeþ ȝou my lord' quod she [leaf 172, back]
That' whilom weren al my hertes rest'
That' I shal goon I wil goon whan ȝou lest' 847

(114)

But' þ*er* ȝe me profre such dowarie 848
As I furst' brouȝt' it' is wel in my mynde
It' were my wrecched cloþes no þing' faire
þe which to me nowe were ful hard' to fynde 851
How god howe gentile *and* how kinde
ȝe semed by ȝoure spech *and* ȝour' visage
þe day þat' maked was oure mariage 854

(115)

But' soþ is seide algate I finde it' trewe 855
ffor in effecte is proued nowe on me
Loue is not' olde as whan it' is newe
ffor certes lord' for non aduersite 858
To dyen in þis cas it' shal not be
That' in worde or werk' I shal repent'
þat' I ȝou ȝaue myn hert in good entent' 861

(116)

My lorde ȝe wote þat' in my faders place 862
ȝe diden me stripen out' of my poor wede
And richely ȝe cladden me of ȝoure grace
To ȝou brouȝt' I not' ellis out' of drede 865
But' fait' nakednesse *and* maidenhede
But' here aȝein ȝoure cloþing' I restore
And eke my weddyng' ringe for eu*er*more 868

(117)

The remen*aun*te of ȝ*our* Iwels redy be 869
wiþ in ȝour' chambr*e* dare I it seyuely seye
Naked out' of my faders hous quod she
I come/ and naked I mote t*ur*ne ageyne 872

Al ȝoure plesaunce wil I folowe feyne
But' if I hope it' be not' ȝoure entente
þat' I smoklees out' of ȝoure paleis went' 875

(118)

ȝe cowde not' do so dishonest' a þinge 876
That' ilk wombe in which our children lay [leaf 173]
Shuld byfore þe puple in my walkinge
Be seyn al bare wherfor I ȝou pray 879
lat' me not' like a worm gon by þe way
Remembre ȝou myn / owne lorde so dere
I was ȝoure wif þouȝe I vnworþi were 882

(119)

Wherfore in guerdon of my maidenhede 883
Which þat' I wrouȝt' and not' aȝein bere
As vouche þ sauf to ȝeue me to my mede
But' such a smokke as I was wont' to were 886
þat' I þerwiþ may hille þe wombe of here
þat' was ȝoure wif *and* here I take my leue
Of ȝowe myn owne lord lest' I ȝou greue 889

(120)

The smok' quod he þat' þou hast' on þi bak' 890
Lat' it' be stille and bere it' forþ wiþ þe
But' wel vnneþ þat' word he spak'
But' went' his way for reuthe *and* pite 893
Byfore þe folk' hure self stripeþ she
And in her smok' wiþ hede *and* fete al bare
Toward' her fadres hous forþ is she fare 896

(121)

The folk' folowed weping' in hir' way 897
And fortune eu*ere* þei cursed as þei goñ
But' she from weping' kept' her eyen day
Ne *in* þis tyme word spak' she noñ 900
Her fader þat' here of herd anoñ
Cursed þe day *and* tyme þ*at* nature
Shope him to be a lyues creature 903

For out' of doute þis olde poor man 904
was euer' suspecte of her mariage
ffor euer he demed siþen it bygan
þat' whan þe lord yfylled had his corage 907
hy*m* wold þenk' it' was a desp*ar*age
To his astate so lowe to a liȝt' [leaf 173, back]
And voiden hir' as sone as eu*er*e he myȝt' 910

(123)

Aȝeinst his douȝtere hastely goþ he 911
ffor he by þe noys of folk' knewe her co*m*myng'
And wiþ her olde cote as it myȝt be
He keuereþ hir' ful sorowfully wepinge 914
But' on hur' body myȝt' he it' not bringe
ffor rude was þe cloþ and more of age
By dayes fele þan hur' mariage 917

(124)

Thus w*ith* her fadere for a certeyn space 918
dwelleþ þis floure of wively pacience
That' neu*er* by her wordes ne be her face
Bifore þe folk' ne in her absence 921
Ne shewed she þat' to hir' was doñ offence
Ne of hie astate in remembra*u*nce
Ne had she as by her co*u*nten*au*nce 924

(125)

No wonder is for in [her] grete estate 925
Her goost' was euere in pleyn hu*m*ilite
No tender mouþe ne hert' delicate
Ne pompe ne semblant' of Rialte 928
But' ful of pacience and benygnite
Discrete and pruydeles and eu*er*e honurable
And to her husbonde euere meke *and* stable 931

(126)

Men speke of Iob and most' of his humblesse 932
As clerkes whan hem lust' can wel endite
Namely of men but' in soþfastnesse
þouȝe clerkes preise wo*m*men but' a lite 935

þer can no man in humblesse he*m* aquite
As wo*m*men can ne ben half so trewe
As wo*m*men bene but' it be fallen newe 938

[*THE SIXTH PART.*]

Fro babyloyne is þis Erle of Pavie come 939
Of whiche þe word spronge to more *and* lesse
And to þe pules eeres al *and* som*m*e
was couþe eke a newe Marquyssesse [leaf 174] 942
He wiþ hym brouȝt' in pompe *and* suche riechesse
þat' was neuere sey wiþ mannys eye
So noble aray in Westlombardye 945

The Marquis þat' Shope an knewe al þis 946
Er þat' þis erle was co*m*men sent' his massage
ffor cely poor' Gryseldys
And she w*ith* humble hert' *and* glad visage 949
Nouȝt' wiþ swollen hert' in her corage
Come at' his heest' and on here knees her sette
And reuerently and wisely she hy*m* grette 952

Griseld quod he my will is vtt*er*ly 953
þis maide þat' shal wedded be vnto me
Resceyued be to morowe as Really
As it' is possible in my hous to be 956
And eke þat' euery wiȝt' in his degre
Haue his estate in sittyng' and se*r*uise
And also plesaunce as ȝe can best' deuyse 959

I haue no wo*m*man suffisant' certayn 960
þe Chambres to aray in ordyn*au*nce
After my lust' *and* þ*er*for wil I fayn
þat' þine were al such gouern*au*nce 963
þou knowest' eke of olde al my plesa*u*nce
þouȝe þine aray be bad and euel ysey
Do þou þi deuoyre at' þe lest wey 966

Nouȝt' only lord þat' I am glad q*uod*' she 967
To do ȝoure lust' but' I desire also
ȝoure forto plese and se*r*ue i*n* my degre
W*ith*out' fayntise and shal euermoo 970
Ne neuer for no wele ne for no woo
Ne shal þe goost' w*ith*in my hert' stynt'
To loue ȝou best' w*ith* al my trewe entent' 973

(132)

And wiþ þ*at*' word she gan þe hous to diȝt' [leaf 174, back]
And tables to sette and beddys to make
And peyned hure to doo al þat' she myȝt'
Preying' þe chambreres for goddis sake 977
To hasten hem and fast' swope *and* shake
And she þe most' seruisable at alł
Haþ euery ychambre araied *and* his halle 980

(133)

Aboute vndern gan þis Erle aliȝt' 981
That' wiþ him brouȝt' þise noble childre tweie
ffor which̄ þe puple ranne to se þ*at* siȝt'
And hure araye so richely beseye 984
And þan at' arst amonges he*m* þei gon̄ seye
That' walt*er* was no foole þough̄ hy*m* lest'
To chaunge his wiff for it' was for þe best' 987

(134)

For she is fairrer' as þei demen alle 988
Than is Griseł and more tender' of age
And fairrer fruyte bytwene he*m* shuld' falle
And more plesaunt' for hir' hiȝe lynage 991
Hir' broþer' so faire was of his age
þat' hy*m* to seen þe puple had kauȝt' plesau*n*ce
Co*m*mendyng' nowe ȝe Marquis gou*ernaun*ce 994

(135)

O sterne puple vnsad and [vn]trewe 995
Eu*er*e vndiscrete and chaungyng' as a fane
Delitinge eu*er*e in Rumo*ur* þat' is newe
ffor like þe mone euere wexe ȝe *and* wane 998

Euere ful of clapping' dere ynowe a Iane
ȝour' dome is fals ȝour constañce euel preueþ
A wel grete fool is he þat' on ȝou leueþ 1001

(136)

Thus seiden sadde folk in þat' Cite 1002
Whan þat' þe puple gased vp *and* doun
ffor þei were glad riȝt' for þe nouelte
To make a newe lady of her toun 1005
No more of þis make I mencioun [leaf 175]
But' to griseld' aȝein wil I me dresse
And telle her constance *and* her bysynesse 1008

(137)

Wel bysy was gryseld in euery thinge 1009
þat' to þe feest' was pertinent'
Riȝt' naught' was she abasshed of her cloþinge
þouȝe þei were Rude and eke somdel to-rent' 1012
But' wiþ glad chere to þe gate is went'
wiþ oþer folk to greten þe Marquissesse
And after doþ she forþ her bysynesse 1015

(138)

Wiþ ful glad chere þe gestes she receyueþ 1016
And Boxomly euerich in his degre
That' no man defawte þer perceyueþ
But' euere þei wondren what' she myȝt be 1019
That' in so poor aray was forto se
And cowde such honure & reuerence
And worþely þei preisen her prudence 1022

(139)

In al þis me[ne] while she ne stynte 1023
This maiden and eke her broþer to commend'
Wiþ al her hert' and benigne entente
So wel þat' no man koude her prise amende 1026
But' at' þe last' whan at' þise lordes wende
To sitten a doun he gan to calle
Griseld' as she was bysy in þe halle 1029

Griseldᵉ quod he as itᵗ were in play 1030
How likeþ þe my wifᵗ in her bewte
Riȝtᵗ wel quod she my lorde for in good fay
A fairrerʳ sawe I neuere non quod she 1033
I prey to god so ȝeue ȝou prosp*er*ite
And so hope I he wil to ȝou sende
Plesaunce ynouȝe to ȝoure lyues ende 1036

(141)

Sutᵗ oon þingᵗ I biseche *and* warne also./ 1037
þatᵗ ȝe prikᵗ wiþ no tormentynge [leaf 175, back]
þis tendere mayden as ȝe han doñ moo
ffor she is fostred in her norshynge 1040
fful tenderly in her ȝongᵗ pleyynge
She coude notᵗ aduersite endure
As coude a poor fostred creature 1043

(142)

And whan þis Walterʳ segħ her pacience 1044
her glad chere and no malice atᵗ aħ
And he so oftᵗ haþ done hirʳ offence
And she euer constantᵗ and sad as a waħ 1047
Contynuyngᵗ euer her innocence ou*er*aħ
This stordy marquis gan his hert*e* dresse
To Rwe vpon hurʳ wifly stidfastnesse [1]1050

(143)

This is ynouȝe Griseldᵉ myñ q*uo*d he 1051
Be no more agastᵗ ne euel apayde
I haue þi feiþ and þi benignyte
As wel as euer wo*m*man was asaied 1054
In gr[e]te astate and poorly araied
Now knowe I dere wiff þi stedfastnesse
And hure in armes toke *and* gan to kesse 1057

(144)

And she for wonder toke þ*er*of no kepe 1058
She herd notᵗ whatᵗ þingᵗ þatᵗ he seide
She ferde as she had stertᵗ outᵗ of her sclepe
Til she outᵗ of þe maisednesse abreide 1061

Griseldᵉ quod he by god þatˢ for vs deyde
þou artˢ my wif *and* noon oþer I haue
Ne neuere had as god my soule saue 1064

(145)

This is þi douȝter whicħ *þou* hast supposed 1065
To bene my wif and noon oþer feiþfully
shal bene myn heirˢ as I haue euere disposed
Thowe bere hem in þi body trewly 1068
At boylen haue I kepte he*m* sikerly
Take hem aȝein for þou myȝtˢ notˢ seyn [leaf 176]
þatˢ þow hast lorn eny of þi children tweynˢ 1071

(146)

And folk þatˢ oþ*er*wise han seide of me 1072
I warne hem wel þatˢ I haue done þis dede
ffor no malice ne for no cruelte
Butˢ forto assay þi wo*m*manhede 1075
And notˢ forto scle my children god forbede
Butˢ forto kepen he*m* prively *and* stille
Til I þi p*ur*poos knewe and al þi wille 1078

(147)

And whan she þis herdᵉ ado*un* i*n* swowe she falleþ 1079
ffor pitous ioyingˢ and after hire swowinge
She boþ her yōnge children to hur*e* calleþ
And in hur*e* armes pitously wepinge 1082
Enbrased boþ tenderly kissynge
Wel like a modere wiþ her saltˢ teeresˢ
She baþed boþ her visage *and* her heeres 1085

(148)

O sucħ a pitous þinge itˢ was to see 1086
Her sownyngˢ *and* her pitous vois to hereˢ
Gram*er*cy my lord god y thenk ȝou q*uo*d she
þatˢ ȝe han saued me my children dereˢ 1089
Now recħ I neuere to be dede riȝtˢ here
Siþ I stonde in ȝourˢ loue *and* *in* ȝourˢ *grace*
No force of deþ ne whan my spirit pace 1092

A tender o dere .o. ȝenge children mynd 1093
ȝoure wooful modere wende stedfastly
þat cruel houndes or some vermynd
Had eten ȝou but god of his mercy 1096
And ȝoure benigne fader tenderly
Haþ done ȝou kepte *and* þat same stounde
Al sodeynly she swapte do*un* to þe g*r*ounde 1099

(150)

And hin her swowne so sadly holdeþ she 1100
her children two whan she gan he*m* brace
That wiþ grete sceleight and difficulte [leaf 176, back]
The children from her armes gan þei to rase 1103
O mony a tere .o mony a pitous face
Doun ranne of hem þat stoden hyr beside
Vnneþ aboute hur myȝt þei abide 1106

(151)

Walt*er* hir vptakeþ *and* her sorowe gladeþ 1107
She ariseþ vp al abasshed from her trance
And euery wiȝt hir Ioye and feest makeþ
To she haue kauȝt aȝein her countenance 1110
Walt*er* her doþ so feiþfully plesaunce
þat it was deynte for to se þe chere
Bitwixe hem two nowe þei bene mette *in* fere 1113

(152)

Thise ladys whan þei her tyme say 1114
han taken hur and into chambr*e* gon*e*
And stripen hir out of her rude aray
And in a cloþe of gold þat brighte shon*e* 1117
wiþ a crowne of mony a riche ston*e*
vpon hur hede þei hir into halle brouȝt
And þer she was honoured as she ouȝt 1120

(153)

Thus haþ þis pitous day a blisful ende 1121
ffor euery man and wo*m*man doþ his myȝt
This day in myrþe and reuel to dispende
Til on þe welken shoon þe sterres briȝt 1124

ffor more solempne in euery mannys siȝt'
This fest' was and gretter of costage
þan was þe reuel of þe mariage 1127

(154)

fful mony a ȝeer in high̃ prosperite 1128
lyuen þise two in concord̃ and in rest'
And richely his douȝter' maried he
Vnto a lord on of þe worþiest' 1131
Of al̃ ytaile and þan in pees *and* rest'
His wifes fader' in his courte he kepeþ
Til þat' his soule out' of' his body crepeth̃ [leaf 177] 1134

(155)

His sone entreþ into his heritage 1135
In rest' and pees aftere his faders day
And fortunate was eke in mariage
Al putte he not' his wif in assay 1138
This world̃ is not' [so] stronge it' is no nay
As it' haþ bene in olde tymes ȝore
And harkeneþ what' þe auct*our* seiþ þerfore 1141

(156)

þis storie is seide not' *þat'* wives shuld̃ 1142
ffolowe Gryseld as in hu*m*ilite
ffor it' were importable þouȝe þei wold̃
But' *þat'* euery wiȝt' in his degre 1145
Shulde be constant' in aduersite.
This storie which̃ he wiþ high̃ stile enditeþ
Wiþ pacience Griseld̃ he qwiteþ 1148

(157)

ffor siþens a wo*m*man was so pacient' 1149
Vnto a mortal̃ man moch̃ more we ouȝt'
Resceyue alle in gree *þat'* god vs sent'
ffor grete seelys he preueþ *þat'* he bouȝt' 1152
Mankynde þe which̃ *þat'* he wrouȝt'
As seiþ seint' Iame if ȝe his pistel rede
He preueþ folk al day it' is no drede 1155

And suffreþ vs as for our ex*er*cise 1156
Wiþ sharpe shoures of adu*er*site
Wel ofte to be leten in sondry wise
Nowe forto knowe vs for certys he 1159
Er we were born knewe al our freelte
And for our best is al our gou*ernau*nce
Lat vs it haue þan in vertuous suffrance 1162

[*Chaucer's addition to the Tale.*]

But oo witte harkeneþ lordyngges er ȝe goo / 1163
It were ful harde nowe adayes
In al a toune fynde Griseldys þre or two
ffor if þei were putte i*n* such assaies 1166
þe gold of hem haþ nowe so hard alaies
Wiþ bras þat pouȝe þe kynde be faire atte ye
It woll raþer brast a two þan plye 1169

(160)

[ffor whiche hiere . for the wifes love of bath [MS Reg. 17 D xv, *leaf* 175, *back*: *not in Reg.* 18 C II, *Sloane* 1685, *or Harl.* 1758.]
whos lyf and al hirs . swete god maynteigne[1]
In high maistrie . and ellis were it skath
I wil with lusty hert . fresh and grene 1173
Say now a song . to gladde yow I wene
And late vs stynt . of Ernestful matiere
Herknyth my song . that saith in this manere] 1176

[[1] 1-*line gap in the MS, after l.* 1171.]

¶ **Le Voy De Chaucere** / [*headline*]

(161)

GRiseld is dede and eke her pacience [leaf 177, back]
And boþ at onys yburied in Ytalie
ffor which I cry in open audience 1179
No wedded man be hardy to assaile
His wyves pacience in trust to fynde
Griseldes for in certeyn he shal faile 1182

O noble wyues ful of hegh̄ prudence
lat' none hu*m*ilite ȝoure tonge nayle
Ne lat' no clerk' haue cause ne diligence 1185
To write of ȝou a storie of such̄ m*er*vaile
As of griselde pacient' *and* kynde
lest' Chychyuache ȝou swelowe in hir entraile 1188

Foloweþ ekko þat' holdeþ no silence
But' euere answereþ at' þe countretale
Beþ not' bydaffed for our Innocence 1191
But' sharpely take on ȝou þe gou*er*naile
Emprinteþ wel þis lessoñ in ȝoure mynde
ffor Comon p*ro*fit' sith̄ it' may availe 1194

NE drede hem nouȝt' doth̄ hem no reuerence 1201
ffor þouȝe þine husbonde araied be in maile
þe arowes of þi crabbed eloquence 1203
Shal perce his brest *and* eke his aduentale
In Ialowsie I rede eke þou hy*m* bynde
And þat' þou shalt make hy*m* couche as doþ a quale 1206

If þou be faire þere folk bene i*n* present'
Shewe þou þi visage and þine apparaile
If þowe be fowle be free of þi dispence 1209
To gete þe freendes ay do þi travaile
Be aye of chere as liȝt' as leef on lynde
And lat' hy*m* care and wepe *and* wryng' *and* waile 1212

ȝe Arche wiffes stondeþ at' ȝour' defence 1195
Siþ ȝe bene stronge as is a grete camaile
Ne Suffreþ not' þat' man do ȝou offence 1197
And sclendere wyves feble as in bataile
Beth̄ egre as a tygre ȝende in Ynde
Ay Clappeþ as a mylle I ȝou counsaile. 1200

[*For the Squire's Prologue of the Petworth MS see the Man-of-Law-Shipman Link.*]

¶ The prologe of þe ffra*u*nkeleyn. [*headline of leaf 178, front*]

EHY goddis mercy seide oure hoost' þoo /
Alle euel wyues god kepe vs fro 2420
ffor mony scleiȝtes and sub[t]ilites
Bene in wo*m*men þat' bene eue*r*e bisy as bees
Vs foly men forto desceyue
ffor from þe soþ euere wil þei weive 2424
By mony ensamples it' proueþ weH
But' doutelees as trewe as eny stele
I haue a wiff' þough she poor be
But' of her tunge a labbyng' shrew is she 2428
And she haþ an hepe of vices moo
þerof no force lat' al suc̄h þingg*es* goo
But' wete ȝe what' in counsaile be it' saide
Me reweþ sore þat' I am to her teide 2432
ffor and I shuld rekne eue[r]y vice
Whic̄h þat' she haþ ywis I were not' wis
And cause whi for it' shuld reported be
And tolde to hur*e* of som*m*e of þis mayne 2436
Of whom it' nedeþ not' to declare
Siþ wo*m*men kon out' suc̄h chaffare
And eke my witte suffiseþ not þ*er*to
To telle alle þ*er*fore my tale is doo 2440

[*No break in the MS.*]

GROUP F. FRAGMENT VII.

§ 1. THE SQUIRE'S HEAD-LINK.

PETWORTH MS.

Sir ffrannkeleyne come ner if it ȝour wille be [*on leaf* 178]
And say vs a tale for sertys ȝe
Can þeron as moch as eny man
Nay sir quod he I wil say as I can 4
With hertely wille for I nyl be rebelle
Aȝeinst ȝoure wille. a tale nowe wil I telle
HAue me excused ȝif I sey amys.
My wille is good *and* loo my tale is þis ·/ 8

¶ Here endeþ þe prologe of þe ffrannkeleyn

And here bygynneþ þe ffra*n*nkeleyns tale [*on leaf* 178]

[*THE PROEM.*]

Thise olde gentile bretoynes in her daies
Of dyuers auentures maden laies
Rymeden in her furst bretoyne tonge
Whicħ layes wiþ her instrumentes þei songe 712
Oiþer ellis radden hem for her plesañce [leaf 178, back]
And oon of hem haue I in remembrance
Whicħ I shal seie wiþ as good wille as I can/
But sirs by cause þat I am but a buriłł man 716
At my bygynnynge furst I ȝou biseche
Haue me excused of my rwde speche
I lered neuere rethorike certeyne
þinge þat I speke it mot be bare *and* pleyne 720
I slepte neuere on þe mounte of p*ar*naso
Ne I neuer lered. Marchus Tullius ne Cithero
Colours of rethorike knewe I none w*ith*-out dredo
But sucħ coloures as growen in þe mede 724
Or ellis sucħ as men dye or peynt
Colours of rethorike bene to me queynt
Mi spirit feleþ not of sucħ matiere
But if ȝou lust my tale shul ȝe here 728

[*No break in the MS.*]

[*THE TALE.*]

Ther was a knyght þat loued *and* did his peyne 730
In armorike þat cleped is breteyne 729
To seruen a lady in his best wise
And mony a laboure & mony a grete emp*r*ise 732

He for his lady wrouȝt' er she were wo*n*ne
ffor she was oon þe fairest' vndere sonne
And eke þerto come of so hig̃ kynrede
þat' wel vnneþes durst' þis knyght' for drede 736
Telle hure his woo his peyne *and* his distresse
But' at' þe last' she for his worþinesse
And namely for his meke obeysañce
Haþ suche a pite kauȝt' of his pen*aun*ce 740
That' prively she felle of his acorde
To take hym for hur*e* husbond' *and* her lord'
Of suche lordship as men han ouer her wyves
And forto lede þe more in blisse her lyves 744
Of his fre wille he swore hur*e* as a knyȝt'
þat' neu*er*e in his wille by day ne nyȝt'
Ne shuld' vpon hy*m* take no maistrie
Aȝeinst' her wille ne kith̃ hur*e* Ialousie 748
But' hur*e* obeye and folowe her wille i*n* all [leaf 179]
As eny louyere to his lady shall
Saue þat' þe name of souereynte
That' wolde he han for shame of his degre 752
She þonkeþ hym and wiþ ful grete hu*m*blesse
She seide sir' siþ of ȝoure gentylnesse
ȝe profre me to han as large a reyne
Ne wolde neuere god betwix vs tweyne 756
As in my gilt' were eiþer werre or striff'
Sir' I wil be ȝoure owne humble & trewe wiff'
Haue here my trouþe til þat' my hert' brest'
Thus bene þei boþ in quiete *and* in rest' 760
ffor oon þinge sires saufly dar I seie
That' frendes euerich̃ oþer most' obeie
ȝif þei wil longe holde companye
loue wil not' bene constreyned be maistrye 764
whan maistrie co*m*meþ þe god of loue anōn
Beteþ on his wengges and fare-wele he is goñ
loue is a þinge as eny spirite free
Wo*m*men of kynde desiren liberte 768

And nouȝt to be constreyned as a þrall
And so done men ȝif I þe soþe seie shall
Loke who þat is most pacient *in* loue
He is at his avauntage aboue 772
Pacience is an hie vertue certeyn
ffor it venquysshe þ as clerkes seyne
Thingges þat rigoure shulde neu*ere* ateyne
ffor euery worde men may not chide ne pleyne 776
Lerneþ to suffre or ellis so mote I goñ
ȝe Shul it lerne wheder ȝe wil or noñ
ffor in þis world certeyne no wiȝt nys
þat he ne doþ or seiþ some tyme amys 780
Or oþer siknesse oiþer constellacioñ
Wyn*e*. woo. or chaunchynge of complexioñ
Causeþ ful oft to do amys eiþer speken
On euery wronge men may not be a-wreken 784
Aftere þe tyme most be temp*er*a*u*nce [leaf 179, back]
To euery wiȝt þat can no gouern*au*nce
And þerfore haþ þis worþi wise knyȝte
To lyue in ease suffrañce hur*e* bihiȝte 788
And she to hym ful wisely gan to swere
þat neuere shuld þer be defaute in here
Here may men seen an humble wif acord
Thus haþ she take her seru*au*nte and her lord 792
Seru*au*nte nyl oñ and lord in mariage
þan was he boþ in lordship and seruage
Seruage nay but in lordschip alloue
Syþens he haþ boþ his lady and his loue 796
His lady certys and his wiff also
The whiclı þat lawe of loue accordeþ þ*er*to
And whan he was in þis prosp*er*ite
Home wiþ his wiff he goþ to his cuntre 800
Not fer fro Pedmarke þer as his dwelling was
Where as he lyueþ in blisse and in solas
Who couthe telle but he had wedded be
The Ioie þe ease and þe prosp*er*ite 804

That is bitwix an husbond and his wiff
A ȝere and more lasted þis blisful lift.
Til þat þis knyȝt of which I spake of þus
That of kynrede was cleped Arueragus 808
Shope hym to goon and dwelle a ȝere or tweyn
In engelond þat cleped was breteyn./
To seche in armes worship and eke honour
ffor alle hit lust he sette in such labour 812
And dwelleþ þere þe boke seiþ þus
Now wil I stint of þis Arueragus
And speken I wil of dorygen his wiff
That loueþ her husbonde as his hertes lift 816
And for his absence wepeþ she *and* sikeþe
As done þise noble wyues whan hem likeþ.
She mourneþ. wakeþ. waileþ. fasteþ & playneþ
Desire of his presence hure so destreyneþ 820
That alle þis wide world she sette at nouȝt [leaf 180]
Her frendes which þat knewe her hevy þouȝt
In al þat euere þei muȝt or may
þei prechen hur þei tellen hur nyȝt *and* day 824
þat causelees she sleeþ her self alas
And euery comfort possible in þis cas
They doon to hure wiþ al her bysynesse
And al forto make hure late her heuynesse 828
By processe as ȝe knowe wel euerechon
Men may so longe grauen in þe ston
Til some figure þer-Inne emprinted be
So longe han þei conforted hure *þat* she 832
Resceyued haþ by hope and by reson
The emprintyng of hure constellacion
Thorgh which here grete sorowe gan aswage
She may not alway endure in such a rage 836
And eke arueragus in al þis care
Haþ sent her lettres home in al þis fare
And þat he wold come hastely aȝein
Oyher ellis had þis sorowe hure hert sclayn 840

Her frendes segh̄ hure hert' gan to sclake
And preiden hure on knees for goddys sake
To come and to Rome hure in companye
Away to dryve hure derk fantasie 844
And fynaly she graunted þat' request'
ffor wel she seghe it' was for þe best'
Nowe stoode hure castel fast' by þe see
And oft wiþ hure frendes walked she 848
Hire to disporte on þe See bank' on hegh̄
Where as she mony shippe *and* barge segh̄
Seilynge her cours where he*m* lust' to goo
But' ȝit' was þer a parcelle of her woo. 852
ffor to hure self ful ofte seide she
Is þ*er* no shippe of so mony as I see
wil bringe home my lord' þ*an* wold' my herte
Al warisshe of þise bittere peynes smerte. 856
A-noþ*er* tyme þer wil she sitte *and* þenke [leaf 180, back]
And cast' her yen downward' fro þe brinke
But' whan she segh̄ þe grissly rokkes blake
ffor verrey fere wold hure hert' quake 860
þat' on her fete she myȝt' not' hure sustene
þan wold she sitte doune on þe grene
And pitously into þe see she wolde bih̄olde
And seyn riȝt' þus with̄ soroweful hert' cold' 864
Eterne god þat' þourgh̄ þi p*u*rueau*n*ce
Ledest' þe worlde by certeyn gou*er*na*u*nce
In ydelnesse as men sayne ye no þinge make
But' lorde þise grisly feendly rokkes blake 868
That' semen raþer a foule co*n*fusioñ
Of werk' þan eny faire creacioñ
Of which̄ a p*ar*fit' god *and* a stable
why han ȝe wrouȝt' þis werk vnresonable 872
ffor by þis werk' souþe. norþ. eest' & west'
Ther nis yfostred man ne bridde ne beest'
It' doþ no good to my witte but' anoyeþ
Se ȝe not' lorde how man-kynde it' destroieþ 876

An C. thousand bodies of man-kynde
Han rokkes sclayn al be þei nouȝt *in* mynde
Which mankynde is so faire part' of þi werke
þat' þow it maidest' like to þine honde werke 880
þan semed it' ȝe had a grete cheerte
Toward' mankynde but' how þan may it' be
þat' ȝe suche menes make it' to destroien./
Which menes done no good but' euer anoyen 884
I wote wel clerkys wollen seyn as he*m* lest'
By argument' þat' al þing' is for þe best'
þough I ne can þe causesse forsoþ knowe
But' þilk god þat' made wynde to blowe 888
As kepe my lorde þis is my conclusion
To clerkes lete I al disputacion
But' wolde god þat' alle þe rokkes blake
Were sonken into helle for his sake 892
Thise rokkes scleen myn hert' for fere [leaf 181]
Thus wold' she sayn wiþ mony a pitous tere
Hire frendes segh þat' [it] was no disport'
To Romen by þe see but' discomfort' 896
And shopen for to pleyen somwher ellis
They leden hure by ryuers *and* by wellys
And eke in oþer places delitables
Thei daunsen *and* pley atte chesse *and* tables 900
So on a day riȝt' on þe morowe tyde
Vnto a gardyne þat' was þer beside
In whiche þat' þei had made her ordin*aun*ce
Of vitaille and of o*þer*e purueaunce 904
They goon *and* pleien hem al þe longe day
And þis was on þe sext' morowe of may
Which may had peinted wiþ his soft*e* shoures
This gardeyn ful of leues *and* of floures 908
And wiþ craft' of ma*n*nys honde so curiously
Araied had þis gardyne traily
That' neuere nas þer gardyne of such p*ri*se
But' ȝif it' were þe verrey p*ar*adyse 912

The odo*ur* of floures and þe fresh*e* siȝt'
Wold haue made eny pensif hert' liȝt'
That' eu*ere* was born̄ but' if to grete siknesse
Oiþer to grete sorowe helde it' in distresse 916
And aftere dynere gan þei to daunce 918
So ful it' was of bewte wiþ plesa*un*ce 917
And syngen also but' dirigen song' allon*e*
And made alway her compleinte *and* her mone 920
ffor she ne segh̄ him in þe daunce goo
þat' was her husbonde *and* her loue also
But' naþelees she most' a tyme abide
And wiþ good hope lete she her sorowe glide 924
¶ Vpon þis daunce amonges oþ*er* men
Daunsed a squier' afore Dorigen
þat' fressher' was and Iolier of araye
As to my dome þan is þe monþe of may 928
He syngeþ and dounseþ passinge eny man [leaf 181, back]
þat' is or was siþens þis world' bygan
þer-wiþ he was if men shuld hy*m* discrive
On þe best' faring' man alyue 932
ȝong'. strong' riȝt' vertuous riche and wis
And wel byloued and holden in grete pris
And shortely if þe soþ tellen I shal
Vnwittyng' of þis Dorigen at' all 936
This lusty squyere seru*aun*te to Venus
Which þat' icleped was aurelius
Had loued hure best' of eny creature
Two ȝere and more as was his auenture 940
But' neuere durst' he telle of his greu*aun*ce
Wiþ-out' cuppe he dronke al his pen*aun*ce
He was despeired no þing' durst' he saye
Sauf in his sawe somwhat' wold' he wreye 944
His woo as in generall compleynyng'
He saide he loued and was byloued no þing'
Of such*e* matere made he mony laies
Songges compleyntes roundelett*es* virrelaies 948

How þat' he durst' not' his sorowe telle
þat' languysshe þ as a fuyre do þ in helle
And deye he seide most I as did Ekko
ffor Narsisus þat' durst' not' telle hure woo 952
In o þ*ere* manere þan ȝe here me saye
Ne durst' he not' to hure his woo bywrey
Saue p*er*auenture somtyme at' daunces
þere ȝonge men kepen her obseru*aun*ces 956
It' may wel be he loked on hure face
In such a wise as man þat' askeþ grace
But' no þinge wist*e* she of his entent'
Naþeles it' happed er þei þens went' 960
Bycause þat' he was hure neighb*our*
And was a mon of worship *and* hono*ur*
And had yknowe hy*m* oft' tymes ȝore
þei fylle in speche more *and* more 964
Vnto his p*ur*poos drowe aurelius [leaf 182]
And whan he segh his tyme he saide þus
Madame quod he by god þat' þis world made
So þat' I wist' it' myȝt' ȝoure hert*e* glade 968
I wold þat' day þat' ȝoure arueragus
Went' to þe see þat' I Aurelius
Had went' þat' I shuld neuere come aȝein
ffor wel I wote my seruise is in veyn 972
My gwerdon is but' brestyng of myn h*er*te
Madame reweþ vpon my peynes smerte
ffor as wiþ a swerde ȝe may me sele or saue
Here at ȝoure fote god wolde I were i*n* graue 976
I haue as nowe no leisere forto seie
Haue mercy on me swete or ȝe wil do me die
She gan to loke vpon Aurelius
Is þis ȝoure wille q*uo*d she and saye ȝe þus 980
Neuer erst' q*uo*d she ne wist' I what' ȝe ment'
But' nowe Aurely I knowe ȝoure entent'
By þilk*e* god þat' ȝaf me soule *and* liff
Ne shal I neuere be an vntrewe wiff 984

In worde ne werk as fer as I haue witte
I wil bene his to whom þat I am knytte
But aftere þat in pleyn þus seide she 988
Take þis for fynal answere as for me 987
Aurely quod she by hiȝe god aboue
Ȝit wil I graunte ȝou to be ȝoure loue
Siþþe I see ȝou so pitously compleyne
Loke what day þat euenlong breteyne 992
ȝe remeue alle þe Rokkes stoon by stoon
þat þei lat shippe ne bote none
I saye whan ȝe han made þise costes so clene
Of Rokkes þat þer be no stone sene 996
þan wil I loue ȝou best of eny man
Haue here my trouþe in al þat euere I can
Is þere noon oþer grace quod he
No by þat lorde quod she þat made me. 1000
ffor wel I wote þat shal neuere betide [leaf 182, back]
Lat such foly out of ȝoure hert glide
What deynte shuld man haue be his lif
fforto loue anoþere mannys wiff 1004
þat haþ hure body whan þat hym likeþ
Aurelius ful ofte sore sikeþ
Woo was Aurelius whan he þis herde
And wiþ a sorowful hert þus answerde 1008
Madame quod he þis were an impossible
þan mote I deye a sodeyne deþe horrible
And wiþ þat worde he turned hym anōn
Tho come hire oþer frendes mony oñ 1012
And in the aleis romed vp *and* doun
And no þing wist of þis conclusioun
But sodeynly bygonne to reuel newe
Til þat þe briȝte sonne lost his hwe 1016
ffor þorisonth̄ haþ raft þe sonne his liȝt
This is as moche to say as it was nyȝt
And home þei gone in Ioie and in solace
Saue only wrecched Aurelius allas 1020

he to his hous is gone wiþ sorowful herte
he seiþ he may not' from his deþ asterte
Hym semeþ he feleþ his hert' colde
Vp to þe heuene his hondys gan he holde 1024
And on his knees bare he sette hym doun
And in his raving' seide þis Orisoun
ffor verrey woo out' of his witte he breide
He nyst' not' what' he spake but' þus he seide 1028
Wiþ pitous hert' haþ he compleynt' bygoñ
Vnto þe goddesse and first vnto þe sonne
He seide Appollo god and gouernour
Of euery planete . herbe . tree *and* flour' 1032
þat' ȝeuest' aftere þi declinacioñ
To ech̃ of hem his tyme *and* his sesoñ
And þine harborowe chaungeþ lowe *and* hie
Lord Phebus cast' þi merciable ye 1036
On wrecched Aurely which̃ þat' am but' lorne [leaf 183]
loo lord' my lady haþ my deþ sworne
Wiþ-oute gilt' but' þi benignite
Vpon my dedly herte haue somme pite 1040
But' wel I wote lorde phebus if ȝou lest'
ȝe may me helpe to haue my lady best'
Now vouche þ sauf þat' I may ȝou devise
How þat' I may be hulpe and in what' wise 1044
ȝoure blisful sustre lucyna þe Shene
þat' of the see is cheef goddes *and* quene
Þouȝe Neptynus haue deite in þe See
ȝit' Emperesse abouen hem is she 1048
ȝe knowen wel lord' riȝt' as hure desire
Is to be qwykkened and liȝtned of ȝour fire
ffor which̃ she folweþ ȝou fu[l] bisily
Riȝt' soo þe See desireþ naturelly 1052
To folowen hure as she þat' is goddesse
Boþe in þe See and in þe Ryuere more *and* lesse
Wherfore lorde phebus þis is my requeste
Do þis myracle or do myn herte to-brest' 1056

That' nowe next' at' þis opposicioñ
Whiche in þe signe shal be of þe lyoñ
As preie hure so grete a floode to brynge
þat' .v. fathme at' þe leest' it' ou*ere* sprynge 1060
þe hiest' rokke in harmorike Bretaigne
And lat' þis flode endure ȝeres tweyne
Than certis to my lady may I saye
Holdeþ ȝoure heeste þe rokkes ben awaye 1064
Lord Phebus do þis miracle for me
Preie hur*e* she goo no faster cours þan ȝe
I seie þowe þus preie ȝoure sustre þat' she go.
No fastere cours þan ȝe þise ȝeres two 1068
þan shal she be euere at þe ful alway
And springe floode lasteþ boþ nyȝt *and* day
And but' she vouche-sauf in such manere
To graunte me my lady souereyn dere 1072
Preie hur*e* to synken euery rokke ado*u*n [leaf 183, back]
Into hur*e* owne derk' regio*u*n
Vndere þe grounde þer Pluto dwelleþ Inne
Oiþere neuere more shal I my lady wynne 1076
Thi temple in Delphos wil I barefote seke
Lorde Phebus biholde ȝe þe teeres of my cheke
And of my peyne haue compassio*u*n
And wiþ þat' worde in swoune he fille ado*u*n. 1080
And longe tyme he lay in a tra*u*nce
his broþer which þat' knewe of his pen*au*nce
Vp kauȝt hy*m* and to bed hy*m* brouȝt'
Despeired in his torment' *and* his þouȝt' 1084
Loo I þis wooful creature lye
May chese whedere to lyve or dye
¶ Arueragus wiþ hool and grete hono*u*r
As he [that] was of chyualrie þe floure 1088
Is co*m*men home and oþer worþi men
O blisful art' þou Doregen
þat' hast' þine lusty husbond' in þine armes
þ*a*t fresh*e* knyght' þat' worþi man of armes 1092

þat louep þe as his owne hertys lif
No þing lest he to be ymagynatiff
pouȝe eny wiȝt had spoke while he was oute
To hure of loue he made þerof no doute 1096
He nouȝt entendeþ to no such matere
But daunseþ . Iusteþ . and makeþ good chere
And þus in Ioye and blisse I lat hem dwelle
And of þe swete Aurelius [1] wil I telle [[1] *first*, Aruellus, *in the MS.*]
In langour and in furious torment þus
Two ȝere and more lay wrecched aurelius .
Or eny foote on erþe he myȝte goñ
No comfort in þis tyme nad he noñ 1104
Sauf of his broþere which þat was a clerke
he knewe of all þis woo and al þis werke
ffor to noñ oþer creature certeyñ
Of þis matere ne durste he no worde seyñ 1108
Vndere his brest he bere it more secree [leaf 184]
Than euere did phamphilius for galathe
His brest was hoole wiþ-outen for to sene
But in his herte was ay þe arowe kene 1112
And wel to knowe þat afore Sanure
In Surgery ful perilous is þe cure
But men myȝt not touche þe arowe pouȝe he come *þerby*
His broþer wepeþ and weilleth *p*rively 1116
Til at þe last hym felle in remembrañce
That whiles he was at orliañce in france
As ȝonge clerkes þat bene likerous
To reden artes þat bene curious 1120
Seken in euery halke and euery herne
P*ar*ticulere sciences forto lerne
He him remembreþ vpon a day
At Orliaunce in stody a boke he saie 1124
Of magike naturel which his felawe
þat was þat tyme a bachilere of lawe
Al were he *þere* to lerne ano*þer* craft
And *p*riuely vpon his desk he laft 1128

This boke which speke mochel of operacioñs
Touchinge þe *eight and twenty* [1] mancioñs [[1] *MS* xxviij]
þat longen to þe mone and such foly
As in our daies nys nat worþ a flye 1132
ffor holy churche seiþ in our bileue
Ne suffreþ noon illusioñ vs to greue
And whan þis booke was in remembraunce
Anone for ioy he gan to daunce 1136
And to hym self saide priuely
My broþer shal be warisshed hastely
ffor I am siker þat þer bene sciences
By which men make dyuers apparences 1140
whiche as þise subtile tregetours pleien
ffor oft at feestes haue I herde seyen
That tregetours wiþ-in an halle large
Han maden come water in a barge. 1144
And in the halle rowe vp and doune [leaf 184, back]
Somtyme haþ semed [come] a grete lyoun
[And somtyme flours spryng as in a mede [Add. MS 5140, *leaf* 190, *back*]
Somtyme a vyne/ and grapes whyt and reede] 1148
Somtyme a castel al of lyme *and* stoñ
And whan hen liked voide it anoñ
Thus semed it to euery mannys siȝt
Now þan conclude I þus if þat I myȝt 1152
At Orliaunce some olde felawe finde
þat had þe moons mancions in mynde
Oiþer magike naturel aboue
He shuld wel make my broþer han his loue 1156
ffor wiþ apparens a man may make
To mannys siȝt þat alle þe Rokkes blake
Of Bretoyne were ywent euerechoñ
And þat shippes by þe brinkes myȝt commen *and* goñ 1160
And in such forme enduren a ȝere or twoo
þan were my broþer warsshed of his woo
þan moste she nedis knowe hure byhest
Or ellis he shal shamen hure at þe lest 1164

What' shuld' I make a lenger tale of þis
Vnto his broþer bedde commen he is
And suche comforte he ȝaue hym forto goñ
To orliaunce þat' he vpstert' anoñ 1168
And on his way forþward' is he fare
In hope to bene ylissed of his care
Whan þei were come almost' to þat' cite
But' if it' were a two forlonge or þree 1172
A ȝonge clerk' romyng' by hemself þei mette
Whiche þat' in latyn thriftely hym grette
And aftere þat' he seide a wonder' þinge
I knowe quod he þe cause of ȝoure commynge 1176
And er þei forþer eny foote went'
He tolde hem all þat' was in her entent'
þis bretoyne clerke hym asked of ffelawes
þe whiche þat' he had knowe in olde daies 1180
And he answered hym þat' þei dede were
ffor whiche he wept' ful mony a tere
Doune of' his hors Aurelius liȝt' anōn [leaf 185]
And forþ wiþ þis Magicien is he gōn 1184
Home to his hous and made hem wel at' eese
Ham lackeþ no vitaile þat' hem myȝt' plese
So wel an araied hous as ther was oñ
Aurelius in his lif ne seglh̄ none 1188
He shewed hem ere [þei] went' to sopere
fforestis and parkes ful of wilde dere
[Ther sauhe he hertis / withh̄ ther hornys hihe [Addit. MS 5140, leaf 191]
The grettest / that evir wer seyne with eye 1192
He sauhe of hem an hundred / slayne wyth houndes
And som withh̄ arwes / bleede of bytter woundes
He sauhe whanne wyde were the wylde deer
The fauconers vpon' a fayr ryver] 1196
And howe facouns han þe herowne sclayñ
þat' seglh̄ he knyghtes iusten in a playñ
And aftere þis he did hym suchh̄ plesaunce
þat' he hym shewed his lady in a daunce 1200

On which̄ him self daunsed as hy*m* þouȝt'
And whan þis maistere þat' þis magike wrouȝt'
Segh̄ it' was tyme and clapped his hondys twoo
A fare wele al oure reuel is ydoo 1204
But' ȝit' remeue þei neuere out' of þis hous
whiles þei seghe al þis siȝt' m*er*veilous
But' in his stody þere as his bokes be
þei sitten stille and no wiȝt' but' þei þre 1208
To him þis maastere called þan a sqwie*re*
And seide him þus is it' redy oure sopere
Almost' an houre it' is I vndertake
Siþens I ȝou bad oure sopere to make 1212
Whan þat' þise worþi men wenten w*ith* me
Vnto my stody þer as my bokes be
Sir' quod þis squiere whan it' likeþ ȝou.
It' is al redy þouȝe ȝe wiH riȝt' nowe 1216
Go we þan soupe quod he & for þe best'
þise Amerous folk' somtyme mote haue rest'
And after sopere fille þei in trete
What' som*me* shulde þis maisters guerdoñ be 1220
To rem[u]e alle þe Rokkes of breteyn*e*
And eke from geroñ to þe mouþe of Seyn
He made it' straunge & swore so god hy*m* saue
Lasse þan a þousand pounde he nolde not' haue 1224
Ne gladly for þat' som*me* he nold not' gooñ [leaf 185, back]
Aurelius wiþ blisful hert' anoñ
Answered þus. fie on a thousand pounde
This wide world' þat' men seyn is rounde 1228
þat' wold I ȝeue if I were lord' of it'
This bargayn is ful drive for we bene knyt'
ȝe shullen be paide trewly be my trouþe
But' lokeþ nowe for no negligence ne slouþe 1232
ȝe tary vs here no lenger þan to morowe
Nay quod this clerke haue here my trouþe to borowe
To bedde is gone Aurelius whan hy*m* list'
And welnygh al þat' nyȝt' he had his rest' 1236

þat' for his laboure and for his hope of blisse
His wooful herte of pen*aun*ce had a lisse
Vpon þis morowe whan þat' it' was day
To breteigne toke þei þe right' way 1240
Aurelius and þis magicien be side
And bene descended *þer* þei willen abide
And þis was as þe bokes me reme*m*bre
þe colde frosty seson of decembre 1244
Phebus wexe olde and hwed like latoñ
That' in his hote declinaciōn
Shoone as þe byrned cold' w*ith* stremes briȝt'
But' nowe in scorpion a-doune he liȝt' 1248
Where as he shone ful pale I dar wel seyn
þe bitter' frostes w*ith* þe sclete *and* reyn
Destroied haþ þe grene in euery ȝerde
Ianus sitte by þe fuyr w*ith* double berde 1252
And drynkeþ of his bugle horn þe wyne
Byforn hym stant' þe brawne of þe tusked swyne
And a noweH crieþ euery lusty man
Aurelius in al þat' eu*er*e he can. 1256
Doth to his maister' chere *and* reuerence
And preieþ him to doñ his diligence
To bringgen him out' of his peynes smerte
Oiþere wiþ a swerde þat' he wold sclitte his h*er*te 1260
That' subtile clerk' which þat' rouþe had of *þ*is man [leaf 186]
þat' nyght' and day he him spedde þat' he ne lan
To waite a tyme of his conclusioñ
This to say to make illusioñ 1264
I ne can no termes of Astrologie 1266
By whiche an apparence of Iogelrie 1265
þat' she and euery wiȝt' shuld wene *and* seie
That' of Breteyn þe rokkes bene away 1268
Oiþ*er*e ellis þei were sonken vnd*er* grounde
So at' þe last' whan he his tyme fo*un*de
To make his iapes and his wrecchednesse
Of which a sup*er*sticious cursednesse 1272

His tables colletanes forþ he brouȝt
fful wel corrected for *þer* lacked nouȝt
Ne his collectis ne his expans ȝeres
Ne his rotes ne his oþer geres 1276
As bene his Centrys *and* his argumentz
And his p*ro*porcions conuenientz
ffor his equaciōns and euery þinge
And by his viiij spere in his wirkinge 1280
He knewe howe fer alnaþe was yshoue
ffrom þe hede of þilk' fixe ariseþ aboue
þat' in þe *ninthe* [1] spere considered is [[1] *MS* ix]
fful subtily he cal[cu]leþ al þis / 1284
And whan he had founde his first' manciōn
He knewe þe remyn*au*nte by p*ro*porciōn
And knewe þe arising' of þe mone weH
And in whoos face and terme euery deH 1288
And knewe ful wel þe monys mancioñ
Accordant' to his operaciōn
And knewe also his oþer obs*eru*a*u*nces
ffor suc̄h illusions and suc̄h mesch*a*unces 1292
As heþen folk' vsed þilk' daies
ffor which̄ no lenger maked he delaies
But' þorgh̄ his magike for a weke or tway
It' semed as al the Rockes were away 1296
Aurelius which̄ þat' despeired is [leaf 186, back]
whedere he shal han his loue or fare amys
Awaiteþ nyȝt' and day of þis myracle
And whan he knewe þer was noñ obstacle 1300
þat' voiden were þise rokkes euerechoñ
Doune to þis maisters fete he fille anoñ
And seide I woful wreche Aurelius
Thonke ȝou lorde and lady myne Venus 1304
That' me han hulpe from my carys cold'
And to þe temple forþ his way haþ hold'
Where he knewe he shuld' þis lady se
And whan he segh̄ his tyme anon riȝt' he 1308

With dredful herte and humble chere
Salwed haþ his souereyn lady dere
My riȝtful lady quod þis wooful man.
Whom I most drede and loue as I best can. 1312
And loþest were of al þis world displese
Nere it þat I for ȝou haue suche dissese
That I most dye here at ȝoure fote anoñ
¶ But not wolde I telle howe me is woo bygoñ 1316
But certes eiþer most I deye or pleien
Ȝe slee me giltelees for verrey peyne
But of my deth̃ þouȝe ye haue no rouþe
Avise ȝou er þat ȝe lese ȝoure trouþe 1320
Repenteþ ȝou for þilke god aboue
Er ȝe me sleen by cause þat I ȝou loue
ffor madame wel ȝe wote *þat* ȝe han hiȝt
Not þat I chalence eny þing of riȝt 1324
Of ȝou souereyn lady but ȝ*our* grace
But in a gardyne ȝonde in such̃ a place
Ȝe wote riȝt wel þat ȝe bihote me
And in myn honde ȝoure trouþe bliȝt ȝe 1328
To loue me best god wote ȝe saide so
Al be þat I vnworþi am þerto.
Madame I seie it for þe honur*e* of ȝou
More þan to saue myn hertes lif riȝt nowe. 1332
I haue done as ȝe comaunded me [leaf 187]
And if ȝe vouchesauf ȝe may go see
And as ȝou lust haueþ ȝoure bihest in mynde
ffor qwikke or dede riȝt þus ȝe shullen me findo 1336
In ȝou lif alł to do me lyve or deye
But wel I woote þe rockes bene aweye
He toke his leue and she astonyed stode
In al her face þer nas on drope of blood 1340
She wende neuere han co*m*men in such a trappe
Allas quod she þat this euere shuld happe
ffor wende I neuere by possibilite
þat such̃ a meschaunce shuld eu*e*re be 1344

It' is aȝeinst' þe processe of nature[1] [[1] *These lines are transposed in the MS.*]
And home she goþ a soriful creature[1]
ffor verrey fere vnneþes may she goo /
She wepeþ and weilleþ a day or twoo 1348
And swowneþ þat' it' rauthe was to see
But' whi it' was to no wiȝt' tolde she
ffor out' of toune was goon Arueragus
But' to hure self she seide and speke þus. 1352
In hure compleynte as ȝe shul aftere here
With face pale *and* wiþ soriful chere
Allas quod she on þe fortune I playñ
þat' vnware hast' wrapped me i*n* þi chayñ 1356
ffor whicħ þe eskape wote I no socour'
Saue only deþ eiþer dishonour'
Oon of þise two bihoueth me to chese
But' naþelees ȝit' had I leuer' lese 1360
My lif þan of my body to haue a shame
Eiþer knowe my self fals eiþ*er* lese my name
And wiþ my deþ I may be quytte I-wis
Han þer nat' mony a wif er þis 1364
And mony a maiden sclayn her self allas
Raþer þan wiþ her bodies done trespas
And certes loo þise stories beren witnesse
Whan xxx.ti tirauntz ful of cursednesse. 1368
Had sclayn Phidon in Athenes at' þe lest' [leaf 187, back]
They co*m*maunded his douȝters to arest'
And bringgen [hem] byforn hy*m* in despit
Al naked to fulfille her foule delite 1372
And in her faders bloode þei made he*m* daunce
Vppon þe pauement' god ȝeue he*m* meschau*n*ce
ffor whicħ þise wooful maidens ful of drede
Raiþer þan þei wolde lese her maidenhede 1376
þei prively bene sterte into a welle
And dreinte hem self as þe bokes telle
Thei of mesue lete enquere and seke
Of lacedemye .l. maidens eke 1380

On which̄ þei wolden doñ her lecherie
But' was þer none of al þat' *com*panye
þat' she nas sclayn and wiþ a glad entent'
Chese þe raþere to die þan to assent' 1384
To bene enpressed of her maidenhede
Whi shuld̄ I þan to dye bene *in* drede
Lo eke þe tiraunte Austoclides
þat' loued a maiden which̄ hiȝt' Symphalides 1388
Whan þat' hure fadere sclayn was on a nyȝt'
Vnto Dianes temple goþ she anoñ riȝt'
And hent' þe ymage wiþ hure armes twoo /
ffrom which̄ ymage she nolde neuer goo 1392
No wiȝt' myȝt' fro hit' hure handis race
Til she was sclayn in þe self place
Nowe siþens þat' maidens had such̄ despit
To bene defouled wiþ mannys foule delite 1396
Wel ouȝte a wiff raþere hure self slee
þan ben defouled as þenkeþ me
What' shal I sayn of hasdrubaldys wif
þat' at' Cartage biraft' herself hur liff 1400
ffor whan she segh̄ þat' Romayns wan þe *toun*
She toke her chuldren alle and swept' ado*un*
Into þe fuyre and ches rather to dye
þan eny Romayñ did hure vilenye 1404
Haþ not' lucres ysclayn hure self allas [leaf 188]
At' Rome þere she oppressed was
Of Tarquyne for hure þouȝt' it' was a shame
To live whan þat' she had lost' her name 1408
The .viij. maidens of Melefie also /
Han sclayn hem self for drede *and* woo /
Raþer þan folk of gaule shuld̄ he*m* oppresse
Moo þan a M!. stories as I gesse 1412
Couþe I nowe telle as touching' þis matere
Whan habradas was sclayn his wif so dere
Her self sclowe and lete her blood to glide
In Habradas woundes brood *and* wide 1416

And saide my body at þe leeste waye
Ther shal no wiȝt defoile if þat I may
What shuld I moo ensamples herof sayñ
Siþen þat so mony han hem self sclayñ 1420
Wel raþer þan þei wolde defowled be
I wil conclude what is best for me
[Tho sleen my self. than be defouled thus [MS Reg. 17 D 15, *leaf* 188]
I wilbe trewe. vnto Arueragus] 1424
Eiþer raþer slee my self in some manere
As did Demonycions douȝtere dere
By cause þat she nolde defoiled be
O Cedasus it is ful grete pite 1428
To reden how þi douȝters deiden allas
þat sclowe hem self for suche manere cas
As grete appetit was it or more
The theban maiden þat for Nichasore 1432
[Hir selfen slough right for suche a maner woo [MS Reg. 17 D 15, *leaf* 188]
Another theban mayden dide right so]
Hure had wedded and sore dressed. [*spurious*]
For oon of Masidoigne had hure oppressed. 1435
What shal I seyn of Nicharatyfs wiff
þat for such caas biraft her self her lif
Howe trewe was eke to Alcebiades
His loue þat forto dyen [raþer] ches 1440
þan forto suffre his body vmbreided be
Loo which a wif was alcesteyn quod she
What Emore of good Penoloþe
Alle Grece knoweþ of her chaastite 1444
Parde of leodomya is written þus [leaf 188, back]
That whan a Troy was sclayn protheselayus
No lenger nold she lyf aftere his day
þe same of noble porcia telle I maye 1448
Wiþ-outen brutus quod she not lyve
To whom [s]he had alhole hure herte ȝeue
The parfit wifhode of Archemesie
Honoured is þorgh alle þe barberye 1452

O teuta quene in þi wifly chastite
To alle wives may þou a myr*our* be
[. . . *no gap in the MS: these lines*
. . . . *known only in Ellesmere MS.*] 1456
Thus playned Dorigen a day or tweye
Purposinge euere þat' she wolde deye
But' naþeles vpon þe þred ny3t'
Home came Arueragus þe worthi kny3t' 1460
And asked hure whi þat' she wepte so sore
And she gan wepen euere þe lenger more
Allas quod she þat' euere was I borne
Thus haue I seide quod she þus haue I sworn̄ 1464
I tolde hy*m* alle as 3e han herde bifore
It' nedeþ not' rehersen it here-of no more.
This husbonde wiþ glad chere in sondry wise
Answerde and seide as I shal [3ou] devise 1468
Is þer ou3t' ellis Dorigen but' þis
Nay nay quod she god helpe me so as wisse
þis is to moche if' it' were goddes wille
3e wiff quod he lat' sclepe þat' is stille 1472
It' may be wel 3it' p*er*auenture to saye
3e shullen 3oure trouþe holden be my fay
ffor god so wisly helpe me
I had wel leuere ystikked forto be 1476
ffor verrey loue which̄ I to 3ou haue
But' 3if 3e shuld' 3oure trouthe Saue
Trouþe is þe hiest' þing' þat' man may kepe
But' wiþ þat' word' he brast' anōn to wepe 1480
And seide I 3ou forbede in peyn̄ of deth̄
That' neuer' whiles 3ou lasteþ lif' & breth̄
To no wi3t' telle of' þis cure [leaf 189]
As I may I most' my lif endure 1484
Ne make no counten*aun*ce of heuynesse
þat' folk' of 3ou may deme harme or gesse
And forþ he clepeþ a sqwiere *and* a mayde
Goþ forþ anon̄ with̄ Dorigen he saide 1488

And bringeþ hure to suc̄h a place anoñ
Thei toke her leue and on her way þei goñ
But' þei ne wiste whi she thider went'
He nolde no wiȝt' telle hure entent' 1492
[. . . . . [These lines known only in the Ellesmere MS.]
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. 1496
. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
This Sqwier whic̄h þat' hiȝt' Aurelius
On dorigen whic̄h þat' was so amerous 1500
Of auenture happed hure to mete
Amydde þe toune riȝt in þe qwikke strete
As she was boune to goo þe way forþ riȝt'
Toward' the gardeyn þer as she had hiȝt' 1504
And he was to þe gardeyñ ward' also
ffor wel he aspied whan she wolde goo
Out' of her hous to eny manere place
But' þus þei mette by auenture or grace 1508
And he salueþ her wiþ glad entent'
And axed of hure whidere þat' she went'
And she answerd' half as she were madde
Vnto þe Gardyne as myn husbond' badde 1512
My trouþe forto hold' allas allas
Aurelius gan wondere of þis cas.
And in his hert' had grete compassioñ
Of hure and of her lamentacioñ 1516
And of Arueragus þe worþi knyȝt'
þat' bad hure holde al þat' she hight'
So loþe he was hys wiff sholde breke her trouþe
And in his hert' he cast' of þis grete routhe 1520
Consideringe þe best' on euery side
þat' from his lust' hym were better abide
Than done so high̄ a cherles wrecchednesse
Aȝeinst' fraunches and al gentilnesse 1524

ffor which in fewe wordes seide he þus [leaf 189, back]
Madame seiþ to ȝoure lorde Arueragus.
þat siþen I se his grete gentilnesse
To ȝou and eke I see wel ȝoure distresse 1528
If ȝe by me shulde breke ȝoure trouþe 1530
Certes me þenkeþ it were grete rouþe [*spurious* 1529]
I haue wel leuer euere to suffre woo
þan I departe þe loue ytwix ȝou twoo 1532
I ȝou relese madame into ȝoure honde
Quite euery surement and euery bonde
That ȝe han made to me as here biforn
¶ Siþens þilk tyme þat ȝe were born 1536
My trouþe I pliȝt I shal ȝou neuer repreef . . /
Of no biheest and here I take my leue
As of þe trewest & þe beste wiff
þat euere ȝit I knewe in al my liff 1540
And euery wiȝt be ware of hure bihest
On Dorygen remembreþ at þe leste
Thus can a squyere don a gentile dede
As wel as can a knyȝt wiþ-oute drede 1544
She þonked hym vpon hure knees al bare
And home vnto hure husbonde is she fare
And tolde hym alle as ȝe han herd me seide
And be ȝe siker he was ful wel apaide 1548
It were impossible to write
What nedeþ lenger in þis cas endite
¶ Arueragus and Dorigen his wiff
In souereyn blisse leden forþ her lif 1552
Neuer aftere was þer anger hem bitwene
He Shershed hure as þouȝe she were a quene
And she was to hym trewe for euermore
Of þise two folk ȝe gete of me no more 1556
¶ Aurelius þat his cost haþ forlorn
Curseþ þe tyme þat euere he was born
Allas quod he alas þat I bihiȝt
Of pured gold a thousand pounde of wiȝt 1560

Vnto þis philosople how shal I doo [leaf 190]
I se no more but þat I am fordoo
Mine heritage most I selle
And bene a begger here I may not dwelle 1564
And shamen al my kynrede in þis place
But I of him may gete better grace
But naþelees I wil of hym assaie
At certeyn dayes ȝere by ȝere to paie 1568
And þonke him of his grete curtesie
My trouþe wil I kepe I wil not lie
Wiþ herte sore he goþ vnto his cofre
And brouȝte golde vnto þis philysophre 1572
þe value of .v. C. pounde I gesse
And hym biseche þ of his gentilnesse
To graunte hym daies of þe remenaunte
And saide maistere I dar wel make auaunte 1576
I failled neuere of my trouþe ȝit
ffor sikerly my dette shal be quytt
Towardes ȝou how þat euere I fare
To goon a begger in my kirtel bare 1580
But wolde ȝe vouche sauf vpon swerte
Two ȝere or þre forto respite me
þan were I welle for ellis mote I selle
¶ Myn heritage þer nys no more to telle 1584
This Philisophre soberly answerde
And seide þus whan he þis word herde
Haue I not holde conaunte vnto þe
ȝis certes wel *and* trewly quod he 1588
hast þou not had þi lady as þe likeþ
No no quod he and sorily he sikeþ
What was þe cause telle me ȝif þou can
Aurelius his tale anoñ bygan 1592
And tolde hym alle as ȝe han herd bifore
It nedeþ not to rehercen it no more
He saide Arueragus of gentilnesse
Had leuere dey in sorowe and distresse 1596

Than his wif were of hure trewþe fals [leaf 190, back]
The sorowe of dorigen he tolde hym als
Howe loþe hire was to be a wicked wiff
And þat' she leuere þat' day lost' hure liff 1600
And þat' hure trouþe she swore þourgh Innocence
She neuere erst' herde speke of apparence
That' made me han of hure so grete pite
And riȝt' as frely as he sent' hire me 1604
As freely sent' I hire to hym aȝein
This is alle and some þer nys no more to seyn
This Philisophre answerd leue broþer
¶ Euerich of ȝou did gentilich til oþer 1608
Thou art' a squyere and he a knyȝt'
But' god forbede for his blisful myȝt'
But' if a clerk' couþe do a gentile dede
As wel as eny of ȝou it' is no drede 1612
Sir' I relece þe þi þousand pounde
As þow riȝt' nowe were cropen out' of þe grounde
Ne neuere er nowe haddest' þou knowe me
ffor sir' I nyl not' take a peny of þe 1616
ffor al my craft' and my travaile
þow hast' ypaied wel for my vitaile
It' is ynowe and fare wele & haue good day
And toke his hors and forþ he goþ his way 1620
¶ Lordingges þis question wil I aske nowe
Which was þe most' free as þenkeþ ȝou
Nowe telleþ me er þat' I forþer wende
I Can no more my tale is at' an ende 1624
¶ **Thus endeþ þe ffrankleyn his tale**

GROUP G. FRAGMENT VIII.

§ 1. THE SECOND NUN'S TALE.

PETWORTH MS.

[*THE PROEM.*] [*on leaf* 190, *back*]

[*No breaks between the stanzas in the MS.*]

¶ And here byginneþ þe prologe of ij. nonne

(1)

The mynystere and þe norice vnto vices 1
Which þat men clepen in englisshñ ydelnesse
The porter of þe gate is of delices
To eschewe and by her contrary hure oppresse 4
þat is to sayn by leeful bysynesse
Wel ouȝt we to doñ our entent
Lest þat þe feend þorghñ ydelnesse vs shent [leaf 191] 7

(2)

For he þat wiþ his þousande cordes seliȝe 8
Continuelly vs waiteþ to be-clappe
Whan he may man in ydelnesse aspie
He can so liȝtly cacche him in his trappe 11
Til þat a man be hent riȝt by þe lappe
He nys nat ware þe fende haþ hym on hond
wel ouȝt vs worchñ and ydelnesse wiþstond 14

(3)

And þouȝe men dradden neuere forto deye 15
ȝit seen men wel by resoun doutelees
That ydelnesse is roten scloggardye
Of whiche þer neuere commeth non encrees 18
And siþens þat sclouthñ hure holdeþ in a lees
Only to sclepe and forto ete *and* drinke
And to devouren alle þat oþere swynke 21

(4)

And forto putten vs from such̄ ydelnesse 22
That' cause is of þe grete confusiō̄
I haue here done my feiþful bysynesse
Aftere þe legende in translaciō̄ 25
Riȝt' of þi glorious lif *and* passiō̄
Thow wiþ þi garlond' wrouȝt' of rooses *and* lilie
The mene I maiden and marter' seint' Cicile 28

(5)

And þou þat' floure of virgynes art' alle 29
Of whom þat' Barnard' lust' so wel to write
To þe at' my bygynnyng' furst' I calle
Thou comforte of vs wrecches do me endite 32
þine maidens deþ þat' was þorgh̄ þi merite
þe eternal lif and of þe feende victorie
Certes men may aftere reden in his storie 35

(6)

Thow maiden *and* modere douȝter' of þ' sone 36
Thow welle of mercy synful soules cure
In whom þat' god for bounte chees to wone[1] [[1] wone *later*]
Thowe humble and hegh̄ ouere euery creature 39
Thou nobledest' so ferre oure nature
That' no desdeyn þe maker had of kynde
His sone in blood and flessh̄ to cloþ *and* wynde 42

(7)

Wiþ-Inne þe cloystere blisful of þi sidys [leaf 191, back] 43
Toke mannys shappe þe eterne loue *and* pees
þat' of þe trynie compas lorde and gide es
Whom erþe and see and heuene wiþ out' relees 46
Ay heryen and þou virgyne wemlees
Bare of þi body and dwellest' maiden pure
þe creatour of euery creature 49

(8)

Assembled is in þe magnificence 50
Wiþ mercy goodnesse *and* suc̄h pite
That' þou arte þe sonne of excellence
Nouȝt' only helpest' hem þat' preien þe 53
But' oftetyme of þi benignyte
fful frely er þat' men þine helpe biseche
þow goost' byforn and art' her lyues leche 56

(9)

Now helpe þou meke and blisful faire maide 57
Me flemed wrec̄h in þis deserte of galle
Thenk' on þe wo*m*man Canane þat' saide
þat' whelpes eten som*me* of þe crommes alle 60
þat' from her lordis table bene yfalle
And þouȝe þat' I þe vnworþi sone of Eue
Be sinful ȝit' accepte my bileue 63

(10)

And for þat' feiþ is dede wiþ-out' werkes 64
So for to worchen ȝeue me witte *and* space
þat' I be quytte from place þ*a*t most' derk' es
O þou þat' art' so faire and so ful of grace 67
Be myne aduocate in so high̄ a place
Ther as wiþ-out' ende is songe Osanna
þou cristes moder and douȝter of Anna 70

(11)

And of þi liȝt' my soule in p*ri*son liȝt' 71
þat' troubled is by þe contagioñ
Of my body and also by þe wiȝt'
Of erþly lust' and fals affectioñ 74
O heuene o. refute .o saluacioñ
Of hem þat' bene in sorowe *and* in distresse
Nowe helpe! for to my werk' I wil me dresse 77

(12)

ȝiſ prey I ȝou þaſ reden þaſ I write 78
ſſoryeueþ me þaſ I doo no diligence [leaf 192]
þis ilk storie subtely to endite
ſſor boþ haue I þe wordys *and* þe sentence 81
Of hem þaſ aſ sey[n]tes reuerence
þe storie wrooſ and folowen her legende
And prei ȝou þaſ ȝe wil my werk amende 84

(13) [*THE TALE.*]

Firſ wolde I ȝou þe name of seinſ Cicile 85
Expoune as men in her stories see
Iſ is to saye in engelisshe heuenes lilie
ſſor pure chaastnesse of virginite 88
Oiþer for she witnesse had of honeste
Of grene of consciens *and* of good fame
The swote sauoure lilie was hure name 91

(14)

Oyþere Cicile is to say þe way to blynde 92
ſſor she ensample was by good techinge
Or ellis Cicile as I writen fynde
Is ioyned by a manere conioynynge 95
Of heuene and lya *and* hier in figurynge
þe heuene is sette for þouȝſ of holynesse
And lya for hure lastinge bisynesse 98

(15)

Cicile maye eke be seide in þis manere 99
Wantyngſ of blyndenesse for hure grete liȝſ
Of sapience and of her thewes clere
Oiþer ellis loo þis maidens name briȝſ 102
Of heuene *and* leos commeþ for which by riȝſ
Men myȝſ þe heuene of puple hure calle
Ensample of good and wise werkes alle 105

(16)

For leos puple in englissh is to say 106
And riȝt' as men may in þe heuen see
The sonne and mone *and* þe sterres euery way
Riȝt so [men] goostly in þis maiden fre 109
Seen þe feiþ of magnificence
And eke of helpe and of sapience
And sondry werkes briȝt' of excellence 112

(17)

And riȝt' as þise philisophres write 113
þat' heuene is swift' rounde *and* brennynge
Riȝt' so was faire Cicile þo white [leaf 192, back]
fful swift' and bisy euere in werkinge 116
And rounde and hool in good perseuerynge
And brenne euere in charite liȝt'
Now haue I declared ȝou what' she hiȝt' 119

¶ **Thus endeþ þe prologe / & here bygynneþ þ^e .ij nonnes tale**

(18)

This maiden briȝt' Cicile as hure lif saiþ ¶ **þe tale ./**
was commen of Romaynes *and* of noble kynde
And so forþe fostred vp in þe faiþ
Of criste and bare hys gospel in her mynde 123
She neuere sesed as I writen fynde
Of hure preiere and god to loue and drede
Bisechinge hym to kepe her maidenhede 126

(19)

And whan þis maiden shuld' vnto a man 127
ywedded be þat' was ful ȝenge of age
That' ycleped was valirian
And þe day was commen of hure mariage 130
She fille deuoute and humble in her corage
Vndere hure Robe of gold' þat' sat' ful faire
And next' hure flessh̄ yclad was in an haire 133

(20)

And while þe Orgels maden melodie 134
To god allone þus in hert' songe she
O lorde my saule *and* eke my body gie
Vnwemmed lest' þat' I *con*founded be 137
And for his loue þat' dyed on a tree
Euery secounde or *thridde*[1] day she fast' [[1] MS .iij.]
Ay bidynge in here orisons ful fast' 140

(21)

The nyght' come and to bed she most' gooñ 141
Wiþ hur*e* husbonde as aften is þe manere
And p*ri*uely she seide anōn
O swete and welbiloued spouse dere 144
þer is a counsaile *and* ȝe wold' it' here
Whicĥ þat' riȝt' fayn I wolde vnto ȝou seien
So þat' ȝe me assured it' nouȝt' bywreien 147

(22)

Valeryan gan fast' vnto hur*e* swere 148
þat' for no caas ne þinge þat' myȝt' be
He shold for no þinge neuere bewrien here [leaf 193]
And þan at' arst' þus to hy*m* seide she 151
I haue an aungeH whicĥ þat' loueþ me
þat' wiþ grete loue whedere I wake or slepe
Is redy ay my body forto kepe 154

(23)

And ȝif þat' ȝe may felen out' of drede 155
þat' ȝe wil ȝou gouerne no þinge amys
He wil ȝou saue and kepe to ȝe be dede
ffor ȝoure clene lyuyng' & ȝoure goodnesse 158
And bring' ȝou streiȝte into heuene blesse
He wol ȝou loue as me for ȝoure clennesse
And schewen ȝou of his Ioye and his briȝtnesse 161

(24)

Valerian corrected as god wolde 162
Answerde aȝein if' I shal trust' to þe
lat' me þat' aungel se and hym biholde
And ȝif þat' it' a verrei aungel be 165
þan wil I done as þou hast' preide me
¶ And ȝif þou loue anoþer man þan me
riȝt' wiþ þis swerde I wil slee ȝou boþe 168

(25)

Cicile Answerde anone in þis wise 169
And if ȝou lust' þat' aungel shul ȝe see
So þat' ȝe trowe on *cri*ste and ȝou baptise
Goþ forþ to Via Apia quod she 172
þat' from þis toune ne stant' but' myles þre
And to þe pore folk' þat' þere dwelle
Say hem riȝt' þus as þat' I shal ȝou telle 175

(26)

Say þat' I Cicilie ȝou to hem sent' 176
To shewe ȝou þe good vrban þe olde
ffor secre nedes and for good entent'
And whan þat' ȝe seint' Vrban han byholde 179
Telle him þe wordes which I to ȝou tolde
And whan þat' he haþ purged ȝou fro synne
þan shul ȝe seen þat' aungel er ȝe twynne 182

(27)

Valerian is to þat place ygōn 183
And riȝt' as hym was tauȝt' by his lurnynge
He fonde þis holy Vrban anoñ ./
Amonge þise seintes buriels lowtynge [leaf 193, back] 186
And he anoñ wiþ-out' tariynge
Did his massage and whan he had [it] tolde
Vrban for ioye gan his hondes vp holde 189

(28)

The teeres from his eien lete he falle 190
Almyȝty god o Ih*es*u crist' quod he
Sowere of chaast' counsaile & herde of vs alle
The fruyte of þilke seede of chaastite 193
þat' þou haste sawe in cicile take to þee
Loo like a bisy bee wiþ-out' gile
þe serueth ay þine owne thralle Cicile 196

(29)

For þilk spouse þat' she toke but' nowe 197
fful like a ferce leon she sendeþ here
As meke as eny lombe was to ȝou·
And wiþ þat' worde anoñ *þer* gan apere 200
An olde man clad wiþ white cloþes clere
And had a boke wiþ *lett*res of golde in honde
And gan biforne Valerian stonde 203

(30)

Valerian as dede fille do*u*ne for drede 204
whan he hy*m* segh̄ and hy*m* vphent' þoo.
And on his boke þus he gan to rede
Oo lord oo feiþ oo god wiþ-oute moo 207
Of c*ri*stendome and fadere of aH also.
Abouen alle *and* oueral euery where
þise wordes al wiþ gold [y]writen were 210

(31)

Whan þis was radde þat' seide þis olde man 211
Leuest' þou þis þing' or no sai ȝe or nay
I leue al þis þin[g] / [quod Valerian [Harl. 7335, *leaf* 93, *back*]
ffor sother thyng'] & [1] þis I dar wel saye [1 than *Harl.*] 214
Vndere þe heuene no wiȝt' ne þenk may
¶ Tho vanshed þat' olde man he nyst' wher
And pope Vrban hym cristened riȝt' þere 217

(32)

Valerian goþ home to seint' Cicile 218
And w*ith*Inne his chambre an Aungel he segh̄ stande
þis aungel had of rose *and* of lilie
Corownes two þe whiche he bare on hande 221
And first' to Cicile as I vnderstande
Be ȝaf þat' oon and aftere gan he take [leaf 194]
þat' oþer to Valerian her make 224

(33)

Wiþ body clene and wiþ vnwe*m*med þouȝt' 225
kepeþ ay wel þise corownes quod he
ffrom paradise to ȝou haue I hem brouȝt'
Ne neuere more shul þei roten be 228
Ne lese her swete sauoure tresteth me
Ne neuere wiȝt' shal seene he*m* wiþ his ye
But' he be chaast' and hate vilenye 231

(34)

And þou valerian for þou so sone 232
Assentest' to good co*u*nsaile also
ffay what' þe lust' and þ*o*u shalt' haue þi bone
I haue a broþer quod Valerian þoo 235
þat' in þis world' I loue no man soo /
I prey ȝou þat' my broþere may haue grace
To knowe þe trouþe as I do in þis place 238

(35)

The aungel answerde god likeþ ȝo*ur* request' 239
And boþ wiþ þe palme of marterdome
ȝe shul come vnto þe blisful fest'
And wiþ þat' worde tiburce his broþere come 242
And whan þat' he þe sauoure vndernome
Wiþ þat' þe roses and þe lilies caste
Wiþ-Inne his herte he gan to wonder faste 245

(36)

And saide in þis tyme I wondere of þe ȝere 246
whennys þis swete sauoure com*m*eþ soo /
And roses and lilies þat' I smelle here
ffor þouȝe I had hem in myn hondes twoo 249
þe sauoure myȝt' in me no depper goo
þe swete smelle þat' in myn hert' I fynde
Haþ chaunged me al in a noþ*er* kinde 252

(37)

Valerian saide two corownes haue we 253
Snowe white and rose rede þ*at*' shyneþ clere
which̄ þat' þine eyen han no myȝt' to see
And as þowe smellest' he*m* þourȝe þ' preiere 256
So Shalt' þou sene hem leue broþer dere
ȝif it' so be þou wilt' wiþ-oute scloupe.
Byleue a riȝt' and knowe þe v*er*rey troupe [leaf 194, back]

(38)

Tyburce answerd' seist' þou þis to me 260
In soþnesse or in dreeme herken ȝe þis
In dremes q*uo*d Valerian han we be
Into þis tyme broþer myn̄ ywis 263
But' nowe at' arst' our troupe dwelling' is
Howe woost' þou quod Tiburce & in what wise
Quod Valerian þat' shal I þe devise 266

(39)

The Aungel of god haþ me þe troupe tauȝt' 267
Which̄ þat' þou shalt' seen if þat' þow wilt' reneye
The ydoles and be clene and ellis nauȝt
But' of þe myracles of þise corownes tweye 270
Seint' Ambrose in his preface list' to seie
Solempnely this noble doctou*r* dere
Co*m*mendeþ it' and seiþ in þis manere 273

(40)

The palme of marterdome forto receyue 274
Seint' Cicile fulfilled of goddys ȝift'
þe worlde and [e]ke hure chambre gan she weyue
Witnesse Tiburce and Cicilees shrift 277
To which god of his bountee wolde shift'
Corownes two of flowres wel smellynge
And made þe aungel hem þoo corownes bringe 280

(41)

This made haþ brouȝt' þise men to blisse aboue 281
þe world haþ wist' what' it' is worþ certeyne
Deuocion of chastite to loue
Tho shewed hym Cicile open and pleyne 284
That' alle ydoles nys but' þing' in veyne
ffor þei bene dombe and þerto þei bene defe
And charged hym his ydols forto lef. 287

(42)

Who þat' þis troueþ nat' a beest' he is 288
Quod þoo tyburce if þat' I shal not' ly
She gan þan kisse his brest' & pat' herd' þis
And was ful glad he couþe trouþ aspie 291
This daye take I þe for myne alye
Saide þis blesful maide faire & dere
ffor aftere þat' she saide as ȝe may here ./ 294

(43)

Loo ryȝt' so as þe loue of *crist'* quod She [leaf 195] 295
Made me þi broþeres wif riȝt' in þat' wise
Anoon for myn alie here take I þe
Siþens þat' þou wolt' þine ydoles despise 298
Go wiþ þi broþer nowe and þe baptise
And make þe clene so þat' þou maist' beholde
þe Aungels face of which þi brother tolde 301

(44)

Tyburse answerd and seide broþer dere 302
ffurst telle me whidere I shal and to what man
To whome quod he come forþ wiþ riȝt goode chere
I wil þe lede vnto þe pope Vrban 305
To Vrban broþer myne Valerian
Quod þoo Tiburce wilt þou me þidere lede
Me þenkeþ þat it were a wondere dede 308

(45)

Remenest þou nat Vrban quod he þoo 309
That is so ofte dampned to be dede
And wonneþ in halkes to and froo
And dar nat onys put forþ his hede 312
Men shul hym brenne in a fire so rede
If he were founde þat men myȝt hym spie
And we also þat bere hym companye 315

(46)

And whiles we seken þilk Dyuinyte 316
þat is ihidde in heuene prive
Algate ybrent in þis world shul we be.
To whom Cicile answerd bodily 319
Men myȝt drede wel and skilfully
This lif to lese myn owne dere broþer
ȝif þis were lyuynge only and noñ oþer 322

(47)

But þer is better lif in ooþer place 323
That neuere shal be lost drede þe nouȝt
Whicħ goddes sone vs tolde þourgħ his grace
[That fadres sone hath alle thynges wrought [Harl. 7335, leaf 95, bk]
And al that wrought is witħ a skilful thoght
The gost that fro the fader gan procede
hatħ sowled hem witħ-outen ony drede 329

(48)

By word and by myracle he goddes sone [Harl. 7335] 330
whan he was in this world declared here
That ther was other lif' ther men may wone
Tho answerde Tiburce o. suster dere 333
Ne sei-destow rig̃ht now in this manere
Ther nys but o god lord in sothfastnesse
And now of' three how maisthow bere witnesse 336

(49)

That shal y telle quod she or y go] [Harl. 7335 *extract ends*]
Riȝt' as a man haþ sapiences þre
Memorie engeyne and intellecte also
So in oo beinge of diuinite 340
Thre p*er*sones riȝt' wel þer may be
Tho gan she hy*m* bisily preche.
Of c*ri*stes come and of his peynes teche [leaf 195, back]

(50)

And mony poyntes of his passioñ 344
How goddys son*n*e in þis wiþ-holde
To do mankynde pleyn remyssioñ
That' was ybounde in cares colde 347
Al þis þinge she vnto Tiburce tolde
And aftere þis Tiburce in good entent'
To pope Vrban wiþ Valerian went' 350

(51)

Whic̃h þonked god *and* wiþ glad hert' *and* liȝt' 351
He Cristned hym and made hy*m* in þat' place
P*ar*fit' in his lyuynge goddys knyȝt'
And̃ after þis Tiburce gate suc̃h grace 354
þat' euery day he seie in tyme *and* space
þe Aungel of god and euery maner bone
þat' he god asked it' was spedde ful sone 357

(52)

It' were ful harde by order' forto seyne 358
Howe mony wonders Ih*e*su for hy*m* wrouȝt'
But' atte last' to telle short' *and* pleyñ
The sergeaunt' of þe towne of Rome he*m* souȝt' 361
And hem byforn Almache þe prouost' brouȝt'
Whiche hem opposed and knewe al her entent'
And to þe ymage of Iubiter he hem sent' 364

(53)

And saide who so wil not' sacrifise 365
Swap of his heued þis is my sentence here
Anone þise marteers þat' I ȝou deuise
On maximius þat' was an officere 368
Of þe prefectis and of Corniculere
Hem hent' and whan he forþe þe seyntes ladde
Hym self he wepte for pite þat' he hadde 371

(54)

Whan maximius had herde þe seintes lore 372
he gate hem of þe turment*our*s leue
And had hem in his hous wiþ-out' more
And wiþ her prechinge er þat' it' were eue 375
þei gone from þe tormen*tour*s to reue
And fro maximius and fro his folk' echone
þe fals feith to trowe in god allone. 378

(55)

Cicile come whan it' was woxen nyȝt' [leaf 196] 379
Wiþ preestes þat' hem c*ri*stened al in fere
And afterward' whan day was waxen liȝt'
Cicile hem seide wiþ a sobre chere 382
Now cristes owne knyȝtes leef *and* dere
Casteþ al away þe werkes of derknesse
And armeþ ȝou in armure of liȝtnesse 385

(56)

ȝe han forsoþe ydone grete bataille 386
Which is nowe done ȝoure feiþ han ȝe confermed
Goþ to þe corowne of lif þat may not faile
The Riȝt Iuge which þat ȝe han disserued 389
Tofore hym ȝe bene feiþfulli preserued
And whan þis þinge was seide as I deuise
Men ladde hem forþe to done þe sacrifise 392

(57)

But whan þei were vnto þe place brouȝt 393
To telle shortely þe conclusioun
Þei nolde ensence ne sacrifise riȝt nouȝt
But on her knees þei setten hem adoun 396
Wiþ humble hert and sad deuocioun
And losten boþ her hedes in þe place
Her saules wenten to þe kinge of grace 399

(58)

This Maximius þat see þis þinge betide 400
wiþ pitous tales tolde it anon riȝt
That he her sawles seghe to heuene glide
Wiþ aungels ful of cleernesse and of liȝt 403
And wiþ his worde conuerted mony a wiȝt
ffor which Almachius did hym so to bete
Wiþ whippe of lede til he his lif gan lete 406

(59)

Cicile hym toke and buried hym anon 407
By Tiburce and Valerian softely
Wiþ-Inne her heriyng place vnder þe ston
And aftere þis Almachius hastely 410
Bad his mynystres fecchen opynly
Cicile so she myȝt in his presence
Don sacrifise and Iubiter ensence 413

(60)

But' þei conu*er*ted þorgh her wise lore 414
Wepten sore and ȝaf credence [leaf 196, back]
Vnto her worde *and* criden more *and* more
Crist' goddes sone wiþ-oute difference 417
Is Verrey god þis is alł oure sentence
þat' haþ so good a se*ruaun*te hy*m* to serue
Thus wiþ oo vois we trowe þouȝe we sterue 420

(61)

Almachius þat' herde al this [doinge] 421
Bad foche Cicile þat' he myȝt' hure se
And alderfurst' loo þis was his askinge
What' maner wo*m*man art' þou þo quod he 424
I am a gentile wo*m*man born quod she
I aske quod he þouȝe it' þe greue
Of þi religioñ and of þi bileue 427

(62)

Whi þan bygan ȝoure questioñ folily 428
Quod she þat' woldest' two answers *con*clude
In oon demannde ȝe asked lewedely
Almachy answerde to þat' si*mi*litude 431
Of whennys [comtł̃ thyn answeryng' so rude [Harl. 7335, *f* 97]
Of' whennys] quod she whan *þat'* she was refreyned
Of conscience and of good feiþ vnfeyned 434

(63)

Almachius seide takest' þou non hede 435
Of þine answere and she hy*m* answerd' þus
ȝoure myȝt' quod she litel is to drede
ffor euery mortełł ma*n*nys power nys 438
But' lich a bladdere ful of wynde ywis
ffor wiþ a nedelys poynte whan þat' is blowe
May al þe boost' of it' be laide ful lowe 441

(64)

Ful wron[g]fully bygonne þou quod he 442
And ȝit' in wronge is þi *per*seuera*un*ce
Woost' þou nat' how oure myȝty p*ri*nces fre
Ben þus comaunded *and* maken ordin*au*nce 445
þat' euery cristen wiȝt' shal han pen*au*nce
But' ȝif þat' he his c*ri*stendome wiþseyn
And goon al quite if he wil it' receyne 448

(65)

ȝoure p*ri*nces aren as ȝoure noblen doþ 449
Quod þoo Cicile and a woode sentence
ȝe make vs gilty and it' nys nat' soth̄
ffor ȝe þat' knowen wel our Innocence [leaf 197] 452
ffor as moch̄ as we done Reuerence
To c*ri*ste and for we bere a cristen name
ȝe put' on vs a cryme and eke a blame 455

(66)

But' we þat' knowen þilk' name soo 456
ffor vertuous we may it' not' say
Almachy answerde chese on of þise twoo
Do sac*ri*fise or cristendome reney 459
þat' þowe may nowe scapen by þat' way
At' which̄ þe holy blisful maide
Gan forto lauȝe and to þe Iuge she saide 462

(67)

O Iuge confuse in þi nycete 463
Wilt' þou þat' I reneye Innocence
To maken me a wicked wiȝt' q*uo*d she
loo he dissimuleþ here in audience 466
He stareþ and wodeþ in his adu*er*tence
To whom Almachius o vnsely wrecch̄
Ne woost' þow not' howe ferre my myȝt' may strecch̄ 469

(68)

Haþ nouȝt' our myȝty prince to me yȝouen 470
ȝe boþ powere and auctoritee
To make folk' to dien or to lyuen
Whi spekest' þou so proudly þan to me 473
I ne speke but' stedfastly quod she
Nouȝt' proudely for I saie as for my side
I hate dedly þilke vice of pride 476

(69)

And ȝif þou drede nouȝt' a soþe to here 477
þan wil I shewen al openly by riȝt'
þat þou hast' made a ful grete lesinge here
Thow seist þi princes han ȝeue þe myȝt' 480
Boþ to sleene and forto quyk a wiȝt'
Thowe þat' ne maist' but' only lif here by-reue
Thow nast' þerto neiþere power ne leue 483

(70)

[But þou mayst sayn thi prynces han the maked] [Harl. 7335, leaf 98]
Mynyster' of deþ for ȝif þou speke of moo
þow liest' for þi power' is ful naked
Do way þi boldnesse saide Almachius þoo 487
And sacrifise to our goddys twoo.
I ne recche nouȝt' what' wronge þat' þou me profre [f. 197, b.]
ffor I can suffre it' as a philosofre 490

(71)

But' þilk' wronges may I nat' endure 491
þat' þou spekest' of oure goddes here quod he
Cicele answerde oo nyce creature
þow seidest no word siþ þou spekest' to me 494
þat' I ne knewe þerwiþ þi nycete
And þat' þowe were in euery maner' wise
A lewde officere and a veyn Iustise 497

(72)

Ther lackeþ no þinge to þine vtter eyen 498
þat' þou nart' blynde for þing' þat' we seen alle
þat' is a stone þat' men may wel aspien
That' ilke stoon a god þou wolt' it' calle 501
I rede þe lat' þine h[ond] vppon it' falle
And taast' it' wel and stoon þou shalt' it' fynde
Siþe þat' þou seest' it' nat' wiþ þine eyen blynde 504

(73)

It' is a shame þat' þe puple shal 505
So scorne þe and lauȝe at' þi foly
ffor comonly wo*m*men wote it'. weH oueraH
That' myȝty god is in heuene hie 508
And þise ymages wel þan maist' þ*o*u spie
To þe ne to hem self may þei nat' profite
And in her effecte þei bene nat' worth a myte 511

(74)

Thise and such oþer wordes saide She 512
And he wexe wrooþ and bad she shuld be lede
home to her hous and in her hous quod he
Brenne hure in a fuyre wiþ flawmes rede 515
And as he bad ryȝt' so was done þe dede
And in a bath. þei gan hur*e* fast' shetten
And nyght' and day grete fuyre vnder þei maden 518

(75)

Al þe longe nyȝt' and eke þe day also 519
ffor al þe fuyre and eke þe baþes hete
She satte al colde and felt' of it' no woo
Ne made hur*e* a drope nouȝt' forto swete 522
But' in þat' bath her lif She most' lete
ffor he Almachie wiþ ful wicked entent'
To scleen hur*e* in þe bath his sonde sent' / [leaf 198]

(76)

Thre strokes in þe nekke he smote hure þoo 526
The turmentour but for no manere chaunce
He myȝt not smyten al her necke a two
And for þer was þat tyme an ordyn*aunce* 529
That none shuld to no man do such pen*aunce*
þe ferþe stroke to smyten soft or sore
This turmento*ur* ne durst do no more. 532

(77)

But half dede wiþ her necke ycoruen þere 533
He laft hure lye and on his waye he went
þe Cristen folk which aboute hure were
Wiþ shetes home ful faire hure hente 536
Thre daies lyued she in þis torment
And neuere cesed hem þe feiþ to teche
Whom she had fostred hem she gan to preche 539

(78)

And hem she ȝaf her meueables *and* her þinge 540
And to þe pope Vrban bytoke hem þoo
And saide þus I asked þis of heuene kynge
To han respite. þre daies and no moo 543
To recomaunde to ȝou er þat I goo
Thise soules loo! *and* þat I myȝt to wirche
Here of myn hous p*er*petuelly a chirche 546

(79)

SEynt Vrban wiþ his dekenes pr*i*uely 547
The body fette and buried it by nyȝt
Amonge his oþer seintes honestly
Hure hous þe churche of seint Cicile hiȝt 550
Seint Vrban halawed it as he wel myȝt
In þe which into þis daye in noble wise
Men done to crist and to his seinte servise. 553

¶ þus endeþ þe tale of þe seconnde nonne

[on leaf 198] ¶ The prologe.

And here bygynneþ þe prologe of þe chanouns ȝeman

Whan ended was þe lif of seinte Cecile
Er we fully had ryden five myle
An boghton vnder þe ble vs gan a take
A man þat' cloþed was in cloþes blake 557
And vnder þat' he had a white surplis.
His hakeney þat' was so pomel gris [leaf 198, back]
So swete þat' it' wondere was to see
It' semed he had prikked myles þre 561
þe hors eke þat' his ȝeman rode vpoñ
So swette þat' vnneþes myȝt' he goñ
Aboute þe peitreH stood þe foom ful hie
He was of fome al flekked as a pie 565
A male twifolde on his cropo*u*r laye
It' semed þat' he caried litel araye
Al liȝt' for somer roode þis worþi man /
And in myn herte wondre I bygan 569
What' þat' he was til I vnderstode
How þat' his cloke was sewed to his hode
ffor which whan I longe had avised me
I demed hy*m* some chanoñ forto be 573
His hatte honge at' his bak' doune by a laas
ffor he had ryden more þan trotte or paas
He had aye prikked like as he were wood
A clote leef he had vnder his hode 577
ffor swote and forto kepe his hede from hete
But' it' was ioye forto seen hy*m* swete
His forhede dropped as a Stillatorie
Were ful of planteyne and of Pyritorie 581

And whan þat' he came he gan to crie 582
God saue quod he þis Ioly companye
ffast' haue I prikked quod he for ȝoure sake
Because þat' I wolde ȝou ouertake 585
To ryden in þis mery company
His ȝeman eke was ful of curtesie
And sirres now in þe morowe tide
Out' of ȝoure ostelrie I segh̄ ȝou̅ ride 589
And warned here my lorde and my souereyn̄
Which̄ þat' to ride wiþ ȝou is ful fayn̄
ffor his disporte he loueþ daliaunce
ffrende for þi warnyng' god ȝeue þe good chaunce 593
Seide oure hoste certes it' wolde seme
Thi lorde were wise and so I may wel deme [leaf 199]
He is ful iocounde also dar I lay
Can he ouȝt' telle a mery tale or twaye 597
Wiþ which̄ he glade may þis company
Who sir' my lord'! ȝe ȝe wiþ-outen lie
He can of merth̄ and eke of Iolite
And þat' ynouȝe also sir' tresteth me 601
And ȝe hym knewe as wel as do I
ȝe wolde wonder howe wel and thriftelie
He couþe worche and þat' in sondry wise
He haþ take on hym mony sondry aprise 605
Which̄ were ful hard' for eny þat' is here
To bringe aboute but' þei of hym it' lere
As homely as he ritte amonge ȝou
If ȝe hym knewe it' wolde be ȝour prowe 609
Ȝe nolde nat' forgoñ his aqueyntaunce
ffor mochel good I dar laie in balaunce
Alh̄ þat' I haue in myn possessioñ
He is a man of hiȝe discrecioñ 613
I warne ȝowe wel he is a passing' man
Wel koþe our' hoost' I prey þe telle me þan
Is he Clerk' or noon telle what' he is
Nay he is gretter þan a clerk' ywis 617

Seide þe ȝeman and in woordes fewe 618
Oostᵗ of his craftᵗ somwhatᵗ I wil ȝou shewe
I saie my lorde can such a sotilte
Butᵗ alꝫ his craftᵗ ȝe may notᵗ witᵗ at me 621
And Somwhatᵗ helpe I ȝitᵗ to his worchinge
þatᵗ al þis grounde whichꝫ þatᵗ we ben on ridynge
Til þatᵗ we come to caunterberye touꝫ
He coude al clere turne vp so doun 625
And paue itᵗ al of siluerᵗ *and* of golde
And whan þis ȝeman had þus ytolde
Vnto oure hooste he seide Benedicite
This þingᵗ is wonder m*er*velous to me 629
Siþens þatᵗ þi lord is of so hiȝe prudence
Bycause of whichꝫ men shulde hym reuerence [leaf 199, back]
þatᵗ of his worship rekkeþ he so lite
His ouersclope nys natᵗ worþ a myte 633
As in effecte to him as motᵗ I goo/
Itᵗ is al baudy and to-tore also
Whi is þi lord so scluttishꝫ I þe prey
And is of powerᵗ better cloþes to beye 637
If þatᵗ his dede accord*e* wiþ þi speche
Telle me þatᵗ I þe biseche
Whi quod þis ȝeman wherto aske ȝe me
God helpe me so for he shal neu*er*e the 641
Butᵗ I wil natᵗ avowe þatᵗ I say
And þerfore kepe itᵗ secre I ȝou pray
He is to wise in feiþ as I bileue
Thatᵗ þatᵗ is ouerdone itᵗ nyl notᵗ preue 645
And riȝtᵗ as clerkes seyn itᵗ is a vice
wherfore in þatᵗ I holde hy*m* lewde *and* nyce
ffor whan a man haþ ouer grete a witte
fful often itᵗ happeþ to misusen itᵗ 649
So doþ my lordᵗ and þatᵗ me greueþ sore
God itᵗ amende I can seye now no more
Therof no fors good ȝeman q*uod*ᵗ *our* hoostᵗ
Syþ of þe konyngᵗ of þi lordᵗ þou wostᵗ 653

Telle howe he doþ I prey þe hertely 654
Siþþes þat' he is so crafty and so sely
Where dwellen ȝe if it' to telle be
In þe Subarbes of a toune q*uo*d he 657
Lurkynge in hernes *and* in lanes blynde
Where þise Robbers and þeues be kynde
Holden her p'rve feerful residence
As þei þat' dar not' shewen her presence 661
So fare we if I shal say þe soþe
ȝit' quod [our] oste lat' me talke to the
Why art' þou discolowred on þi face
Peter' q*uo*d he god ȝeue it' harde *gr*ace 665
I am so vsed þe fire to blowe
That' it' haþ chaunged my colour' as I trowe [leaf 200]
I ne am not' wonte in no myro*ur* to prie
But' swynk*e* sore and lerne to multiplie 669
We Blundren euere *and* powren in þe fire
And for alle þat' we faillen of our desire
ffor euere we lacken our conclusioñ
To moch*e* folk' we bene but' illusioñ 673
And borowe golde be it' a pound' or twoo
Or ten or twelue or mony so*m*mes moo
And make hem wenen at the leest' wey
þat' of a pounde we cowde make twey 677
ȝit' is it' fals and ay we han good hope
It' forto doon and aftere it' we grope
But' þat' science is so fer vs biforne
We mowe not' alle þouȝe we had it' sworne 681
It' ouertake it' slitt' away so fast'
It wil vs make beggers at' þe last'
þe whiles þis ȝeman was þus in his talkyng'
This Chanoñ drowe hy*m* nere *and* herd' al þinge 685
Which þat' þis ȝem[an] spake for suspecioñ
¶ Of mennys speche euere had þis chanoñ
ffor Caton seiþ he þat' gilty is
Demeþ al þinge be spoke of hym ywis 689

By cause of þat' he gan so nyȝe to drawe 690
His ȝeman þat' herd alle his sawe
And þus he seide vnto his ȝeman þoo
Holde now þi pees and speke no wordes moo 693
ffor if þowe doo þu shalt' it' dere aby
þow sclaunderest' me here in þis company
And eke diskeuerest þat' þou shuldest' hide
ȝe quod oure hoost' telle on what' so betide 697
Of al þis þretynge rech̄ þe not' a myte
In feiþ quod he no moore I doo but' lite
And whan þis chanon segh̄ it' wold' nat be
But' þat' his ȝeman wolde telle his p*ri*uete 701
He fledde a-way for verrey sorowe *and* shame
A quod the ȝeman here shal arise a game [leaf 200, back]
AH þat' I can anoñ wil I telle
Siþens he is goon þe foule fende hy*m* quelle 705
ffor neuere here after' wil I wiþ hy*m* mete
ffor peny ne for pounde I ȝou bihete
He þat' me brouȝt' furst' vnto þat' game
Er þat' he dye sorowe haue he *and* shame 709
ffor it' it is ernest' to me by my feiþe
þat' fele I wele what' so eny man seiþe
& ȝit' for all my smerte *and* al my greff
ffor al my sorowe. labour *and* meschieff 713
I kouþe neuere leue it' in no wise
Now wold god my wittes myȝt' suffise
To tellen al þat' longen to þat' art'
But' naþeles ȝit' wil I telle ȝowe part' 717
Siþ*en*s þat' my lorde is goon I wil not' spare
Such̄ þinge as I knowe I wil declare

¶ **Thus endeþ þe prologe of þe chanons ȝeman**

[on leaf 200, back] & here bygynneþ þe tale

[*THE PREAMBLE.*]

Witħ þis chanon [I] dwelt haue seuene ȝere ¶ The tale ./
And of his science am I neuer þe nere
Al þat I had I haue ylost *þer*by
And god woo so han many moo þan I
Ther I was wonte to be riȝt fresħ *and* gay
Of cloþinge and of good aray 725
Now may I were an hose vpon myne heued
And where my coloure was boþ fresħ *and* rede
Now is it wan and of a lewde hwe
Who so it vseþ sore shal he rwe 729
And of my swynk ȝit blered is myn ye
Loo suche au*aun*tage it is to multiplie
That selydinge science haþ me made so bale
That I haue no good wher so euer y fare 733
And ȝit am I endetted so *þer*by
Of golde þat I haue borowed trewly
That whil I lyve I shal it quite neuere
Lat euery man be ware by me for euere 737
What maner man þat casteþ hy*m* *þer*to [leaf 201]
If he contynue I holde his thrift ydo
ffor so helpe me god *þer*by shal he nat wynne
But empty his purs and make his wyttes þinne 741
And whan he thorgħ his madnesse *and* folye
Haþ lost his owne good þorgħ Iop*ar*dye
þan he exciteþ oþer men þerto
To lese her good as hy*m* self haþ doo / 745
ffor to shrewes Ioies it is an ese
To haue her felawes in peyn and dissese

Thus was I ones lerned of a clerk
Of þat no charge I wil speke of our werk 749
Whan we bene þere as we shul exercise
Oure eluessh craft we seme wonder wise
Our teermes bene so clergial *and* so queynte
I blowe þe fyre til þat myn hert feynte 753
What shuld I telle eche proporcioñ
Of þingges which þat we worchen vpon
As on .v. or .vj. vnces may wel be
Of Siluere or of som oþer quantite 757
And bisy me to telle ȝou þe names
Of Orpyment. brent bonys yren. squames
Thatt into powdere grounden bene ful smalh
And in an erthen pot howe þat pitte is alle 761
And salt ypitte In. and also paupere
Byfore þise powdres þat I speke of here
And wel ykeuered wiþ a laumpe of glas
And of moche oþer þinge what þer was 765
And of the potte and glas englutynge
That of þe eyre myȝt passe no þinge
And of þe Esy fire and smert also
Which þat was made *and* of the care *and* woo 769
That we had in our maters sublymynge
And in amalgamynge and calcenynge
Of quik siluere ycleped Mercurie crude
ffor alh oure scleightes we can not conclude 773
Our orpyment and sublymed Mercurye [leaf 201, back]
Our grounde litarge eke on þe porphirie
Of eche of þise of vnces a certeyñ
Nat helpeþ vs oure labour is in veyñ 777
Ne eke oure spirites assencioun
Ne eke our maters þat lyen al fixe a-doun
Mowen in oure worchinge no þing vs availe
ffor lost is al our laboure *and* travaile 781
And alh þe cost on twenty deuel weye
Is lost also whiche we vpon it laye

Ther is also mony a nother þing
That' is to our craft' appertenynge 785
þouȝe I by ordere hem here ne reherce kan
Because þat' I am a lewde man
ȝit' wil I telle hem as þei come to mynde
þouȝe I ne can sette hem in her kynde 789
As boole armonyak. verdegrees. boras
And sondry vessels made of erþe *and* glas
Our' vrynales and our' dyscensories
Violles Creseletys. and sublimatories 793
Concurbites *and* alembykes eke
And oþer suche dere ynowe a leke
Nat' nedeþ it' to rehersen hem alle
Waters rubyfyinge *and* bolles galle. 797
Arsenyke sal armonyak *and* brymstoñ
And herbes coude I telle eke mony oñ
As Egrymoyn Valerian *and* lunarie
And oþer suchñ ȝif þat' me list' tarie 801
Our' lampes brennyng' boþ nyȝt' *and* day
To bringe about' our craft' ȝif þat' we may
Our furnayes eke of Calcynacioñ
And of waters albificacioñ 805
Vnslekked lyme. Chalk *and* gleire of an ey
Powders divers. Ashes. dunge. pisse. *and* cley
Sered pockettes. sal peter'. *and* vitriole
And dyuers fires made of wode *and* Cole 809
Salt tartre. alcalie *and* salt' preparate [leaf 202]
And combust' maters and coagulate
Cley made wiþ horses or mannys here *and* oyle
Of Tartere. alem glas berme wort' & argoille 813
Rysalgere and oþere mateers enbykinge
And eke of oure mateers encorporinge
And of [our] Siluer' citrinacioñ
Our sementynge and fermentacioñ 817
Our ingotes testes *and* mony moo /
I wil ȝou telle as was me tauȝt' also

þe four spirites and þe bodies seuene
By ordre oft' as I herd my lord he*m* neuene 821
The first' spirit' quyk-siluere cleped is
þe Secounde orpyment' þe *thrid*[1] ywis [[1] MS iij]
Sal Armonyak and þe ferþ bremstone
þe bodies seuene eke lo hem here anoñ 825
Sol gold is *and* luna siluer we threpe
Mars. yren M*er*curie quyksiluer' we clepe
Sat*ur*nus lede. and Iubiter is tynne
And Venus Coper' be my fadere kynne 829
This cursed craft' who so wil ex*er*cise
He shal no good han þat' may hy*m* suffise
ffor al þe good he spendeþ þ*er*-aboute
He lese shal þerof haue I no doute 833
Who so þat' list to outen his foly
Lat' hym come forþ *and* lerne forto multiplie
And euery man þat' haþ ouȝt' i*n* his cofre
Lat' [him] apere and wexe a philosofre 837
Ascaunce þat' craft' is so liȝt' to lere
Nay nay god wote al be he monke or frere
Preest' chanon or eny oþ*er* wiȝt'
þouȝe he sitte at' his boke boþ day *and* nyȝt' 841
In lernyng' of þis elvissh̄ nyce lore
Al is in veyn and p*ar*de moch*e* more
Is to lere a lewde man þis sotille
ffy speke nat' þ*er*of for it' wil nat' be 845
Al coude he lettrure or coude he non*e* [leaf 202, back]
As in effecte he shal fynde it' all one
ffor boþ twoo be my saluacioñ
Concluden in multiplicacioñ 849
Iliche wel whan þei han al ydoo
This is to seyn þei failen boþ two
But' ȝit' for þat' I to moche rehersaille
Of waters corosif and of lymaille 853
And of bodyes mollificacioñ
And also of her induracioñ

Oilles abluciōn & metal fusible
To tellen alle wold passen eny bible 857
þat' owhere is wher as for þe best'
Of all þise names now wil I me rest'.
ffor as I trawe I haue ȝou tolde ynowe
To reisen a feende loke he neuere so rowe 861
A nay lat' be þi philosophres stone
Elixir cleped we sechen fast' echone
ffor had we hym þan were we siker ynouȝe
But' vnto god of heuene I make avowe 865
ffor al our craft' whan we han al ydoo
And al oure scleiȝte he wil not' come vs too/
He haþ vs made spende moche good
ffor sorowe of which almost' we wexen wode 869
But' þat' good hope crepeþ in our' hert'
Supposinge euere þouȝe we sore smert'
To be releued by hym afterward
Supposinge þat' hope is sharpe *and* hard 873
I warne ȝou wele it' is to seken euere
þat' future temps haþ made men disseuere
In trest' þerof from alle þat' euere þei hadde
ȝit' of þat' art' þei koude not' wexen sadde 877
ffor vnto hem it' is a bitterswete
So semeþ it' for ne had þei but' a shete
Which þei myȝt' wrap hem in a nyȝt'
And a bak' to walken In by day liȝt' 881
They wold hem Sellen and spenden on þis craft' [leaf 203]
They can not stynt' til no þinge be laft'
And euermore wher þat' euere þei gone
Men may hem knowe by þe smelle of bremstone 885
ffor al þe worlde þei stynken as a gote
Her sauour is so rammyssh and so hote
þat þouȝ a man fro hem a myle be
þe Sauour' wil enfecte hym tresteþ me 889
Lo Thus by smellyng' and be threde bare aray
ȝif þat' men lust' þise folk' þei know may

And if a man wil aske hym prively
Whi þei bene cloþed so vnthriftily 893
Riȝt anone þei wil rownen in his eere
And seie if þey aspied were
Men wolde hem slee by cause of her science
Loo þus þise folk bitraien Innocence 897
Passe ouer þis I go my tale vnto
Er þan þe potte be on þe fuyre ydoo
Of metalles wiþ a certeyn quantite
My lorde hem tempreþ and no man but he 901
Now he is goon I dar saie boldely
ffor as men seyne he can do craftely
Algate I wote wel he haþ such a name
And ȝit ful ofte he renneþ in þe blame 905
And wete ȝe how ful ofte it happeth soo /
The potte to-brekeþ and fare-wel al is goo
Thise metalles bene of so grete violence
Our walles may not maken hem resistence 909
But ȝif þei [weren] wrouȝt of lyme *and* stone
þei percen so þat porȝe þe wall þei gone
And somme of hym synken into þe grounde
Thus haue we lost by tymes mony a pound 913
And somme are scatered al the flore aboute
Somme lepen into þe Roof with-out doute
Thouȝe þat þe feende nat in our siȝt hym shewe
¶ I trowe þat he wiþ vs be þat schrewe 917
In helle wher þat he is lord *and* sire [leaf 203, back]
Ne is þer no more woo angere ne Ire
Whan þat oure pot is broke as I haue saide
Euery man chitte and halt hym euel paide 921
Som saide it was longe on þe fire makinge
Som saide nay it was on þe blowynge
Than was I aferde for þat was myn office
Strawe quod þe þred ȝe bene lewde *and* nyce 925
It was nat tempred as it auȝt be
Nay quod þe ferþe stynt *and* harken me

Be cause oure fire was not made of beche
þat is þe cause noon o*þer*e so theche. 929
I can not telle wheron it is alonge
But wel I woot gret strif is vs amonge
What quod my lorde þer nys no more to done
Of þise periles I wil be ware eft sone 933
I am riȝt syker þat þe pot was craised
Be as be may be ȝe no þinge amased
As vsage is lat swepe þe flore as swithe
Pluk vp ȝoure hert and be ȝe glad *and* blithe 937
þe Mullok on an hepe yswoped was
And on þe floore cast a canvas.
And al this Mullok in a sif yth[r]owe
And ysifted and yplukked many a throwe 941
P*ar*de quod oon somwhat of oure metaH
Ȝit is þer here þouȝe we haue nat aH
And þouȝe þis þinge myshapped haþ as nowe
Anoþer tyme It may be wel ynowe 945
Vs most putt our good in auenture
A Marchaunte p*ar*de may not ay endure
Tresteþ me wel in his p*ros*p*er*ite
Somtyme his good is drowned i*n* þe see 949
And somtyme co*m*meth it sauf vnto þe londe
Pees quod my lord þe next tyme I wil fonde
To brynge our craft al in anoþ*er* plite
And but I doo sirs lat me haue þe wite 953
Ther was defaute in somwhat wel I wote [leaf 204]
And oþer seide þe fire was ou*er*e hote
But be it hote or cold I dar saie þis
þat we concluden euer more amys 957
We faillen of that which þat we wold haue
And in oure madnesse euermore we raue
And whan we bene to-gidere euerechoñ
Euery man semeþ as wise as Salomoñ 961
But al þinge which þat seineþ[1] as þe golde [[1] *or* semeþ]
Is nat golde as I haue herd it tolde

Ne euery appel þat' is faire at' ye
Ne is not' god what' so men clappe or crie 965
Riȝt' so loo fareþ it' amonges vs /
He[1] þat' semeþ þe wisest' by Ih*esus* [[1] *or* Ho]
Is moost' foole whan it' co*m*meþ to þe preef
And he þat' semeþ trewest' is a þeef 969
That' shul ȝe knowe er þat' I from ȝou wende
Be þat' I of my tale haue made an ende

[*No break in the MS.*]

[*THE TALE.*]

Ther is a chanon of Religio*un* ¶ 2ª p*ar*s.:.
Amonges vs wolde enfecte al a to*un* 973
Thouȝe it' as grete were as was Nyniue
Rome. Alisaundre. Troie & o*per* þre
his scleightes and his infinite falsnesse
Ther couþe no man writen as I gesse 977
Thouȝe þat' he myȝt' lyuen a thousand ȝere
In al þis world of falsenesse nys his pere
ffor in his teermes he wil hy*m* so wynde
And speke his wordes in so scleȝe a kynde 981
Whan he comune shal wiþ eny wiȝt'
That' he wil make hy*m* dote anoñ riȝt'
But' it' þe feende be as hy*m* seluen is
fful mony a man haþ he bygyled er þis 985
And wil if þat' he may lif a while
And ȝit' men riden and goon ful mony a myle
Hy*m* forto seke and haue of a-queynta*un*ce
Nat' knowing' of his fals gouern*au*nce 989
And ȝif ȝe lust' to ȝeue me audience [leaf 204, back]
I wil it' tellen in wiþ ȝoure presence
But' worshipful Chanoñ Religious
Ne demeþ not' I sclaundere ȝour hous 993
Al-þouȝe my tale of a chanon be
Of euery ordere som shrewe is parde
And god forbede þat' all a companye
Shulde rewe a syngule mannys foly 997
To sclaundere ȝou is nat' myn entent'
But' to correcten þat' mys I-ment'

This tale was not' only told' for ȝou
But' eke for oþer moo ȝe wote wel howe 1001
That' amonges *cri*stes apostels twelue
þer ne was no traito*ur* but' Iudas selue
Than whi shulde þe remen*aun*te att haue blame
þat' giltlees were be ȝou saye I þe same 1005
Sauf only þis if ȝe wil harken me
If eny Iudas in ȝoure couent' be
Remeueth hy*m* be tyme I ȝou rede
If shame or losse may causen eny drede 1009
And beþ no þinge displesed I ȝou pray
But' in this caas herkneþ what' I say
In london was a preest' an annuele*re*
That' þ*er*Inne dwelled had mony a ȝere 1013
Which̄ was so plesaunt' *and* so seruisable
Vnto þe wiff where he was att table
That' she wolde suffre hy*m* no þing' forto paye
ffor borde ne. cloþinge went' he neue*re* so gay 1017
And spending' siluere had he riȝt' ynowe
Therof no force I wil procede as nowe
And telle forþ my tale of þe chanoñ
þat' brouȝt' þis preest' to confusioñ 1021
This fals chanoñ came vpon a day
Vnto þe preestes chambere þ*er* he lay
Bysechinge hym to lene hy*m* a certeyñ
Of golde and he wolde quyte hy*m* ageyñ 1025
Leneþ me a marke quod he but' daies þre [leaf 205]
And at' my day I wil it' quite þe
And it' so be þow fynde me fals
An oþer day honge me by þe hals 1029
This prest' him toke a marke and þ*at*' as swithe
And þis chanon hy*m* þonked ofte sithe
And toke his leue and went' forþ his way
And at' þe þred day brouȝt' his monay 1033
And to þis preest' he toke his gold ageyñ
Therof þis preest' was glad and fayñ

Certes q*uod* he no þinge anoyeþ me
To lene a man a noble or twoo or þree 1037
Or what' þinge were in my possessioñ
Whan he so trewe is of condicioñ
That' in no wise he breke wil his day
To such̃ a man I can neu*ere* say nay 1041
What' quod þis chanon shuld I be vntrewe
¶ Nay þat' were þinge fallen al of nwe
Treuþe is a þing' þat' I wil euer kepe
Vnto þe day in which̃ þat' I shal crepe 1045
Into my graue and ellis god forbede
Bileueþ þis as siker as is ȝoure crede
God thonke I and in good tyme be it' seide
That' þer was neuere man ȝit' euel apaide 1049
ffor gold ne siluere þat' he to me lent'
Ne neuere falshede to myne hert' I ment'
And sir*e* quod he nowe in my privete
Siþens ȝe so goodly haue bene to me 1053
And kyþed to me so grete gentilnesse
Somwhat' to quiten wiþ ȝour' kyndenesse
I wil ȝou shewe and ȝif ȝou lust to lere
I shal it' shewe to ȝou anon riȝt here 1057
How I can worchen in philosophie
Takeþ good hede ȝe shullen see wel at ye
That' I wil done a maistrie er I goo
ȝe q*uod* þe preest' ȝe sir' and wil ȝe so 1061
Marie þerof I prei ȝou hertely [leaf 205, back]
At' ȝoure comaundement' sir' trewly
Quod þe chanon and ellis god forbede
Loo howe þis þeef kouþe his *ser*uise bede 1065
fful soþ it' is þat' such̃ *pro*pferd *ser*uise
Stynkeþ as witnessen þise olde wise
And þat' ful sone I wil it' verefie
In þis chanõn is rote of al trecherye 1069
That' euere more delite haþ and gladnesse
Such̃ feendly þouȝtes in his hert empresse

How cristes puple he may to meschief bringe /
God kepe vs from his fals dissimulynge 1073
What wist þis preest wiþ whom þat he delte
Ne of his harme commyng no þing he felte
O sely preest o. sely Innocent
Wiþ couetise anon þou shalt be blent 1077
O gracelees ful blynde is þi conseite
No þing art þow war of þe deceite
Whicħ þat þis fox shapen haþ to þe
His wily wrenches þou maist not flee 1081
Wherfore to goo to þe conclusioñ
þat referreþ to þe confusioñ
Vnhappy man anon I wil me hye
To tellen þine vnwitte and þi foly 1085
And eke þe falsenesse of þat oþer wrecche
As ferforþ as my conyng wil strecche
þis chanoñ was my lorde ȝe wolde wene
Sir Oost in feiþ and by þe Heuene quene 1089
It was anoþer chanon and nat he
þat can an hundred fold more sotilte
he haþ bytraied folk mony tyme
Of his falsnesse it dulleþ me to ryme 1093
Euere whan I speke of his falshede
ffor shame of him my chekes wexen rede
Algates þei bygonne forto glowe
ffor redenesse haue I now riȝt wel I knowe 1097
In my visage for fumes dyuers [leaf 206]
Of metalles whicħ ȝe han herde me rehers
Consumed and waasted han my Redenesse /
Take nowe hede of þi[s] chanons cursednesse 1101
Sir quod he to þe preest lat ȝour man gone
ffor quyk siluere þat we it had anõn
And lat hym brynge vnces twoo or þre
And whan he commeþ as fast shul ȝe se 1105
A wonder þinge whiche ȝe see neuere er þis
Sir quod þe preest it shal be done ywis

He bad his seru*au*nte fecchen him þis þinge
And he al redy was at' his biddynge 1109
And went' hym forþ and come anoñ ageyñ
wiþ þis quyk siluere shortely forto seyñ
And toke þise vnces þre to þe chano*u*n
And he it' laide faire and wel ado*u*n 1113
And bad þe seru*au*nte colys forto bryng*e*
þat' he anoon my3t' goo to his worchis
The Colis ri3t' anoon weren sette
And þis Chanon toke out' a croslette 1117
Of his bosom and shewed it' þe preest'
This instrument' q*uo*d he whicĥ þ*at*' þou seest'
Take in þine hond and pitt þiself þ*er*Inne
Of þis quyk siluer an vnce an here bygynne 1121
In þe name of' crist' to wex a philosophre
þer bene ful fewe whiche þat' I wold profre
To shewen hem þus mochel of my science
ffor 3e shullen see here by exp*er*ience 1125
That' þis quik siluer' I wil mortefie
Ri3t' in 3oure si3t' anoon wiþ-out' lye
And made it' as good siluer' *and* as fyne
As þer is eny in 3oure purs er myne 1129
Or ellis where and make it' malliable
And ellis holde me fals *and* vnable
Amonges folke euer to apere
I haue a powder' here þat' cost' me dere 1133
Shal make al good for it' is cause of aĥ [leaf 206, back]
My konynge which þat' I 3ou shewe shaĥ
Voideþ 3our man and lat' hy*m* be þer out'
And schitte þe door þe whiles we bene aboute 1137
Our privete þat' no man vs espie
Whiles we worchen in þis philosophie
Al as he bad fulfilled was i*n* dede
This ilk*e* s*eru*a*u*nte anoon ri3t' out' 3ede 1141
And his maistere shitte þe dore anon*e*
And to her laboure spedely þei gon*e*

This preest' at' þis cursed chanons biddynge
Vppon þe fure anon sette þis þinge 1145
And blewe þe fire and busied hym ful fast'
And this chanon into þis croslette cast'
A powdere I note wherof it' was
I-made eiþer of chalk' or ellis of glasse 1149
Or somwhat' ellis was not' worþ a flie
To blynde wiþ þis preest' *and* bad hym hie
Thise coles forto cowchen al aboue
The crosselette: for in token þat' I þe loue 1153
Quod þis Chanon þine hondes twoo
Shal worche al þing' which̄ as shal be doo
Graunt' mercy quod þe preest' *and* was ful glad
And cowched coles as þe chanon̄ bad 1157
And þe whilys he bisy was þis feendly wreche
This fals chanon þe foule fende hym feeche
Out' of his bosom toke a bechen cole
In which̄ ful sotilly was made an hole 1161
And þer-in pitte was of siluere lymaille
An vnce and stopped was wiþ-out' faille
This hoole wiþ wex to kepe þe lymaille Inne
And vnderstondeþ þat' þis fals gynne 1165
was not' made þere but' it' was made bifore
And oþer þingges I shal telle more
Here-afterward which̄ þat' he wiþ hym brouȝt'
Ere he come þere to begile hym he þouȝt' 1169
And so did er þei went' atwynne [leaf 207]
Til he had turned hym couþe he nat' blynne
It' dulleþ me whan þat' I of hym speke
On his falshede fayn wolde I be a-wreke 1173
If I wist' howe but' he is here *and* there
He is so variaunt' he bitte no where
But' takeþ hede nowe sirs for goddys loue
He toke his cole of whiche I speke aboue 1177
And in his honde he bare it' prively
And whiles þe preest' couched bisyly

þe coles as I tolde ȝou er þis
þis Chanon seide frende ȝe done a-mys 1181
þis is not' couched as it' ouȝt be
But' sone I shal amende it' quod he
Now lat' me medle *þer*wiþ but' a while
ffor of ȝou haue I pite be seint' gyle 1185
ȝe bene riȝt' hoote I se wel howe ȝe swete
Haue here a cloþe and wipe away þe wete
And whilys þe preest' his wy haas
þis chanon toke his cole I shrewe his faas 1189
And laide it' vpon abouen þe mydward
Of þe Crosselette and blewe wel afterward
Til þat' þe Coles gonne fast' brenne
Nowe ȝeue vs drynk' quod þe chanoñ þen · 1193
As swith . al shal be wel I vndertake
Sitte we a-doun and lat' vs mery make
And whan þe chanons bechen cole
Was brentte al þe lymaille out' of þe hole 1197
Into þe Crosselette anoñ fille ado*un*
And so it' most' nedes by reso*un*
Siþ it' so euen aboue couched was
But' þerof wist' no þing' þe preste allas 1201
He demed al þe coles liche good
ffor of þe scleiȝt' no þinge he vnderstood
And whan this Alkamyster*e* segh̄ his tyme
Riseþ vp sir*e* preest' *and* stondeth by me . . 1205
And for I wote wele Ingot' haue ȝe none [eaf 207, back]
Goþ walkeþ forþ and bringeþ a chalk ston*e*
ffor I wil make it' of þe same shap
That' is an Ingot' ȝif I may haue happe 1209
And bringe wiþ ȝou a bolle or a panne
fful of water and ȝe shul see þan
Howe þat' oure bysynesse shal happe *and* preue
And ȝit' for ȝe shul haue no mysbileue 1213
Ne wronge conceite of me in ȝoure absence
I wil not' bene out' of ȝoure presence

But' go wiþ ȝou and come wiþ ȝou agayñ
þe Chambere door shortely to sayn 1217
They opned and shette *and* went' forþ her way
And forþ wiþ hem þei karied þe kay
And co*m*me ageyn wiþ-out' eny delay
What' shuld I tary al þe longe day 1221
He toke þe chalk' and shope it' in þe wise
Of an Ingot' as I shal ȝou deuyse
I saie he toke out' of his owne scleue
A teyne of siluere euel mote he cheue 1225
Whiche þat' was but' an vnce of weiȝt'
And takeþ hede nowe of þis cursed scleiȝt'
He shope his Ingot' in length̄ *and* in brede
Of þe teyne wiþ-out' eny drede 1229
So sclyȝly þat' þe preest' it' not' aspied
And in his scleue agayn he gan it' hide
And from þe fire toke vp his matere
And into þe Ingot' it' pitt w*ith* mery chere 1233
And into þe water vessel he it' cast'
whan þat' him list' *and* bad þe p*r*eest' as fast'
Loke what' þer is pitte in þine honde *and* grope
Thow shalt' fynde þere siluer as I hope 1237
What' deuel of helle shuld it' ellis be
Shavynge of siluere. siluere is p*ar*de
He pitte In his honde and toke vp a tey*n*e
Of Syluere fyne and glad in euery vey*n*e 1241
was þis preest' whan he segh̄ þat' it' was so [leaf 208]
Goddys blessing' and his moders also
And alle halowes haue ȝe sir' chanōn
Saide þe preest' and I her malysoñ 1245
But' and ȝe vouche-sauf to teche me
This noble craft' and þis sotilte
I wil be ȝo*ur* in all þat' euere I may
Quod þe Chanoñ ȝit' wil I make assay 1249
The secounde tyme þat' ȝe mow take hede
And bene expert' of þis and in ȝo*ur* nede

Anoþ*er* day [assaie] in myne absence
This disciplyne and þis crafty science 1253
¶ Lat' take anoþ*er* vnce quod he þoo
Of quik siluer' wiþ-out' wordes moo /
And doo þ*er*wiþ as ȝe han done er þis
With̃ þat' oþer which̃ þat' now siluer' is 1257
This preest' hym busieþ in al þat' he can
To done as þis chanon þis cursed man
Comaundeþ hy*m* and fast' bloweþ þ^e^ fuyr*e*
fforto come to þe effecte of his desire 1261
And þis chanon riȝt' in þe mene while
Al redy was þis preest' eft' to begile
And for a counten*aun*ce in his hand bare
An holowe stik' take hede and be ware 1265
In þe eende of which̃ an vnce *and* no more
Of syluere lymaille put' was al bifore
was in his cole and stopped w*ith* wex wel
fforto kepe in his lymaille euery deł 1269
And whilis þis preest' was in his bysynesse
This Chanon wiþ his stik gan hy*m* dresse
To hym anon and his powdere cast' Inne
As he did eer þe deuel out' of his skynne 1273
Hym turne I prey to god for his falshede
ffor he was euer fals in oþe and dede
And wiþ his stik' aboue þe crosselette
That' was ordeyned wiþ þat' fals gette. 1277
He stireþ þe coles til relente gan [leaf 208, back]
The wex a-gayn þe fuyr as euery man
But' it' a fool be wote wele & mote nede
And alle þat' in þe hole was. out' ȝede 1281
And into þe crosselette hastely it' felle
The preest' supposed no þing' but' wel
But' bisied him fast' and was wonder' fayn̄
Supposing' nouȝt' but' trouþe soþ to sayn 1285
He was so glad I can not' expresse
In no manere his myrth̃ and his gladnesse

And to þe Chanōn he p*rof*red eft' sone
Body and good ȝe quod þe chanon sone 1289
þouȝe poor I be crafty þow shalt' me fynde
I warne þe ȝit' is þer more behinde
Is þere eny copoure here In saide he
ȝe sir' quod þe preest I trowe þ*er* be 1293
Ellis goo by some and þat' as swithe
Now sir' go forþ þi way *and* hithe.
And went' his way and w*ith* þis coper he cam
And þis chanon it in his honde it' nam. 1297
And of' þat' copere weyed out' but' an vnce
Al to symple is my tunge to pronu*n*ce
His monstr*e* as his witte þe doublenesse
Of þis Chanon roote of cursednesse 1301
He semed frendely to hem þ*at*' knewe hy*m* nouȝt'
Bot' he was feendly boþ in werk and þouȝt'
It' werieþ me to telle of his falsenesse
And nathelees ȝit' wil I it' expresse 1305
To þat' entent' men may be ware þ*er*by
And for noon o*þere* cause trewly
He putt þis vnce of copere into þe crosselette
And on the fuyr*e* as swith*e* he haþ it' sette 1309
And kest' In powdere and made þ^e^ preest' to blowe
And in his worching' for to stoupe lowe
As he did erst' and al nys but' a Iape
Riȝt' as him list' þe preest' he made his Ape 1313
And afterward' into the Ingot' he it' cast' [leaf 209]
And in þe panne pitt' it' atte last'
Of watere and in he pitte his owne honde
And in his scleue as ȝe to-fornhonde 1317
Herd me telle he had a siluer' teyne
He sclily toke it' out' þis cursed heyne
Vnwetinge þis preest' of his fals craft'
And in þe pannes botme he haþ it' laft'. 1321
And in þe watere rombleþ too and froo /
And wondere prively toke it' vp also

þe Copere teyne nat' knowing' þis preest'
And hid it' and hente hy*m* by þe breest' 1325
And to hym spake and þus seide in his game ./
Stowpeþ a-downe by god ȝe be to blame.
Helpeþ me nowe as I did ȝowe whilere
Putte Inne ȝoure honde and lokeþ what' is þere 1329
This preest' toke vp þis siluere teyne anone
And þan seide þe chanoñ lat' vs gone
Wiþ þise þre teynes whiche þat' we han wrouȝt'
To so*m*me goldsmyth̃ and wit' ȝif it' be ouȝt' 1333
ffor be my feiþe I nolde for myne hode
But' if þei were siluere fyne *and* goode
And þat' as swiþe proued shal it' be
Vnto þe goldsmythe wiþ þise teynes þre 1337
went' þei and pitte þise teynes i*n* assay
To fyre and hamere myȝt' no man say nay
But' þei were as hem ouȝte to be
This sotted preest' who was glad but' he 1341
Was neuere bridde gladdere aȝeinst' þe day
Ne nyȝtyngale in þe sesoñ of may.
was neuere noon þat' list' better to synge
Ne lady lustyer in Carolynge. . . . 1345
And forto speke of loue and wo*m*manhede
Ne knyght' in armes done an hardy dede
To stonden in grace of his lady dere.
Than had þis preest' þis craft' to lere. 1349
And to þe chanon þus he speke *and* saide
ffor þe loue of god þat' for vs deyde ./
And as I may deserue it' vnto yowe [leaf 209, back]
What' shal þis Receyte cost' telleþ nowe 1353
By oure lady quod þis chanon it' is dere /
I warne ȝou. for saaf I and a frere
In Engelonde þer can no man it' make
No fors quod he nowe sir' for goddys sake / 1357
What' shal I paye telle me I þe pray
Iwis quod [he] it' is ful dere I saie /

Sir' at' oon woord' if þat' þe lest' it' haue
ȝe shul paye xl. ti. so god me saue. 1361
And ne were þe frendship þat' ȝe did er þis
To me / ȝe shuld paie more ywis ./
This preest' þe some of fourty pounde anoñ
Of nobles fette and toke hem euerechoñ 1365
To þis Chanoñ for þis ilk receite
AH his worchinge was strawe *and* deceite
Sir' preest' he saide I kepe forto haue no loos
Of my craft' for I wold it' were kept' cloos 1369
And as ȝe loue me kepeþ it' secre
ffor and men knewe al my sotilte
By god men wolde haue so grete envie
To me by cause of my philosophie 1373
I Shuld be dede þer nys noon oþer waye
God it' for-bede quod þe preest' what' say ȝe.
ȝit' had I leuere spenden al þe good'
Whicħ þat' I haue and ellys wexe I wood / 1377
Than þat' ȝe shuld fallen in sucħ meschief'
ffor ȝoure good wille sir' haue ȝe riȝt' good preef'
Quod þe Chanōn. and sir'. oft' gra*un*t mercy
He went' his way þat' neuere þe preest' hy*m* sie 1381
Aftere þat' day and whan þis preest' shulde
Maken assay at' suche tyme as he wolde
Of þis Receite. fare wel it' wold nat' be
Loo þus byiaped and begiled was he 1385
Thus makeþ he his Introducciōn
To bringe folk to her destructiōn
Considereþ surs howe *þat'* in eche astaat'
Bytwix men and gold þer is debaat' 1389
So fer forþ þat' vnneþes þer is oon [leaf 210]
This multiplyinge so blendeþ mony ōñ
That' in good faiþ I trowe þat' it' be
The cause grettest' of þe grete scarcete 1393
Thise philosophres speken so mystely
In þis craft' þat' men can not' come *þer*by

ffor eny witte þat' men han now adayes.
þei may wel Chitere and iangle as doñ þise Iaies 1397
And in her teemes sette lust' *and* peyne
But' to her *pur*poos shul þei neuere atteyne
A man may liȝtly lerne ȝif he haue ouȝte
To multiplie and bringe his good to nouȝte 1401
Loo suche a lucre is in þis lusty game.
A ma*n*nes merþe wil it' turne al to grame
And empty also grete and heuy purses.
And make folk to purchasen curses 1405
Of hem þat' han þerto her good ylent'
O. fy for shame þei þat' han be brent'
Allas can þei nat' flee þe fires hete
ȝe þat' it' losen I rede ȝe it' lete 1409
lest' ȝe lesen aH. for bette þan neu*ere* is late
Neuere to þrive were to longe a date
Thouȝe ȝe prolle ay ȝe shul it' neuer' fynde
ȝe bene as bolde as is bayard' þe blynde 1413
That' blundreþ forþ and perile casteþ noñ
He was bolde to renne aȝeinst a stoñ
As forto goo be sides in þe way
¶ Soo faren ȝe þat' multiplien I say 1417
ȝif þat' oure eyen can nat' seen ariȝt'
Lokeþ þat' ȝoure mynde lak' nat' his siȝt'
ffor þouȝe ȝe loke neuere so brode and stare
ȝe shul nat' wynne a myte in þat' chaffare 1421
But' waasten aH þat' ȝe may rappe *and* renne
Wiþdrawe þe fuyre lest' it' so fast' brenne
Medleth no more wiþ þat' art' I mene.
ffor ȝif ȝe doon ȝoure þrift' is goon ful clene 1425
And riȝt' as swiþe I wil ȝou telle here
What' þat' þe philosophres seyn in þis matere
Loo þus seiþ alnold' of þe newe toune [leaf 210, back]
As his rosarie makeþ mencio*u*n 1429
He seiþ riȝt' þus wiþ-oute eny lie
Ther may no man mercury mortefie

But ȝif it be wiþ his broþers knowlecchinge
Howe þat he whicħ þat ferst seide þis þinge 1433
Of philosophres fader was hermes
He seiþ how þat þe dragon doutelees /
Ne dyeþ nat but ȝif he be sclayñ
Wiþ his broþer and þat is forto sayne 1437
By þe dragon mercurye and noon oþer
He vnderstood þat bremstone were his broþer
þat out of sol and luna were ydrawe
And þerfore saide he take hede to my sawe 1441
Lat no man bisie him þis arte forto seche.
But he þat þe entenciōn and speche
Of philosophres vnderstonde can
And if he doo he is a lewde man · 1445
ffor þis science and þis conyng quod he
Is of þe secree of secrees parde
Also þer was a disciple of plato
þat on a tyme saide his maister too. 1449
As his boke somere wil bere witnesse
And þis was his demaunde en soþfastnesse
Tel me þe name of a priue stoōn
And plato answered vnto hym anoōn 1453
Take þe stoon þat Titanos men name
Whicħ is þat quod he magnasia is þe same
His disciple seide ȝe sire and is it þus
þis is ignotum per ignocius 1457
What is magnasia good sire I pray
It is a watere þat is made I saye
Of elementes foure quod Plato.
Telle me þe roche good sire quod he þoo. 1461
Of þat watere if it be ȝoure wille
Nay nay quod Plato certeyn þat I nyħ
The philosophres were sworn echoñ
þat þei shulde diskeuere it to no moñ 1465
Ne in no booke it write in no manere [leaf 211]
ffor vnto crist it is so leef and dere.

þat' he wil nat' þat' it' diskeuered be
But' where it' likeþ to his deite 1469
Man to enspire and eke forto defende
Whan þat' him likeþ loo þis is þe ende
Than conclude I þus siþens þat' god of heuene
Ne wil not' þat' þe philisophres neuene 1473
How þat' a man shal come vnto þis stone
I rede as for the best' lat' it gone
ffor who so makeþ god his aduersarye
As forto worche eny þinge in contrarie 1477
Vnto his wille certes neuere shal he thryve
þouȝe þat' he multiplie teerme of his lyue
And þer a poynt' for eended is my tale.
God seende euery trewe man boote of his bale / 1481
¶ **Thus endeþ þe chanons ȝeman his tale**

And here bigynneþ þ^e^ prologe of þ^e^ docto*ur* of Phisike
[*on leaf* 211]

Whan þat' þis ȝeman his tale ended hadde ¶ **The prolog.**
Of þis fals Chanon which̃ þat' was so badde
Our hoost' gan say trewly & in certayn̄
þis preest' was begiled soþly forto sayñ 4
He wenynge forto be a philosophre
Til he lift' riȝt' nouȝt' in his Cophre
And soþly þis preest' had a liþer Iape
This cursed chanon put' in his hode an ape 8
But' al þis passe I ouer as nowe
Sir' docto*ur* of phisik I prey ȝou
Telle vs a tale of some honest' matere
It' shal be done ȝif þat' ȝe wil it here 12
Saide þis docto*ur and* his tale bygan anoñ
Now good men quod he harkeneþ eu*er*echoñ

¶ **Thus endeþ þe prologe of þe docto*ur* of phisik**

GROUP C. FRAGMENT IV.

§ 1. THE DOCTOR'S TALE.

PETWORTH MS.

And here bygynneþ þe tale. [*on leaf* 211]

Ther was as telleþ vs tytus lyneus ¶ **The tale./**
A knyghtꝰ þatꝰ cleped was virgineus
ffulfilled of honoures and worþinesse
And stronge of frendes and of richesse 4
A douȝterꝰ he had be his wiffꝰ [leaf 211, back]
And neuere had hee moo *in* al his lifꝰ
ffaire was þis maide in excellentꝰ bewte
Abouen euery wiȝtꝰ þatꝰ man may see 8
ffor nature haþ wiþ souereyn [diligence]
fformed hirꝰ in so grete excellence
As þouȝe she wold say loo I nature.
Thus can I forme and peynte a creature 12
Whan þat me listꝰ who can me countrefete
Pigmalyon noghtꝰ þouȝe he alway forge *and* bete
Or graue or peyntꝰ for I dar wel sayn
Apollus Zephirus shulde worche in veyn 16
Te graue. peynte. or forge or bete
If þei presumed me to countrefete
ffor he þatꝰ is þe fourmer principal
Haþe made me his vikere general 20
To forme and peintꝰ eche erþely creature
Riȝtꝰ as me listꝰ for al þinge is my cure.
Vnder þe mone þatꝰ may wayne *and* waxe
And for my werkꝰ · no þinge wil I axe 24

My lorde and I bene fully atte acorde
I made hir' to þe worship of my lorde
So doo I alle myne oþer creatures
Of what' coloure þei be or what' figures 28
Thus semeþ me þat' nature wolde say
This maide was of age .xij. ȝere *and* tway
In whiche þat' nature haþ suc̄h delite
ffor riȝt' as she can peynt' aṡ lily white 32
And roody as roose riȝt' wiþ suc̄h peynture
She peynted haþ þis noble creature
Er she was born vpon her lymes fre
Were also briȝt' as suc̄h coloures myȝt' be. 36
And phebus died had her tresses grete
Like to þe stremes of his boorned hete
And ȝif þat' excellent' was her bewte
A thowsand folde more vertuous was she 40
In hur' ne lackeþ no condicioñ
þat' is to preise as by discrecioñ.
As wel in body as goost' chaast' was she [leaf 212]
ffor which̄ she flowred in virginite 44
Wiþ al hu*m*ilite and abstinence
Wiþ alle attemp*er*ance and pacience
Wiþ mesure eke in beringe of araye.
Discrete she was in answering' alwaye 48
And she was wis as pallas dar I seyn
Hir' facoñ eke ful womanly *and* pleyñ
Noon counterfeted teermes had shee
¶ To seme wise but' after her degree. 52
She spak and alle her wordes more *and* lasse
Sownynge in vertue and in gentelnasse
Shamefast' she was in maidens shamfastnesse
Constant' in hert' and euere i*n* bysynesse 56
To drive hur' out' of her scloggardrie
Bachus had of her mouþe no maistrie
ffor wille and þouȝt' done Venus encrece
As men in fire wil casten oile or grece 60

And of her owne vertue vnconstreyned.
She haþe ful oft' tyme hur' seke feyned.
ffor þat' she wolde flee þe companye
where likly was to treten of folye 64
As is at' feestys. Reuels. and daunces
Whiche bene occasioñ of daliaunces
Suche þingges maken children forto be.
To sone ripe and bolde as men may see 68
Whicħ is ful perilous and haþ bene ȝoore
ffor al to sone may she lerne lore.
Of boldnesse whan she is a wiff
And ȝe Maistresses in ȝoure olde liff' 72
þat' lordes douȝters han in gouernaunce
Ne takeþ of my wordes no displesaunce
Thingges þat' bene sette in gouernyngges
Of lordys douȝters oonly for two þingges 76
Oyþer for ȝe han kepte ȝoure honeste
Oyþere ellis ȝe han falle in freelte
And knowen wel ynouȝe þe olde daunce
And konne for-sake fully [sucħ] meschaunce. 80
ffor euermoo þerfor for cristes sake [leaf 212, back]
kepeþ wel þoo þat' ȝe vndertake
A theef for venyson þat' hath forlaft'
His likerousnesse and al his þeeues craft' 84
Can kepe a forest' best' of eny man.
Now kepeþ hem wel for and ȝe wil ȝe can.
lokeþ wel to no vice þat' ȝe assente.
Lest' ȝe be dampned for ȝoure euel entente. 88
ffor who so doþ a traitoure is certeyn.
And takeþ [kepe] of þat' þat' I shal seyn.
Of al treson suffreyn pestilence.
Is whan a wiȝt' bitraieþ innocence. 92
ȝe faders and ȝe moders eke also.
þouȝe ȝe han children be it' on or twoo.
ȝoure is þe charge of al her suffraunce.
Whiles þei bene vnder gouernaunce 96

Be ware þat' by ensample of ȝour' lyuynge
Eþere by necligence in chaastisinge
þat' þei ne perisshe for I dar wel saye
ȝif þat' ȝe done ȝe shul ful sore abaye 100
vndere a sheparde. soft' and negligent'
þe wolf haþ mony a shepe and lomb to-rent'
Suffiseþ oon ensample nowe as here
ffor I mot/ turne aȝein to my matere 104
¶ This maide of which I telle my tale expresse.
She kept' her self her neded no maistresse.
ffor in her lyuynge maidens myȝt' rede
As in a booke euery good woord and dede 108
þat' longeþ to a maide vertuous
She was so prudent' and so bounteuous.
ffor whiche [þe fame] out' sprongе on euery side.
Both of her bewte and of her bounte wide. 112
þat þorowe þe londe þei preised hure echoñ.
þat loued vertue sauf envie allone.
þat' sorie is of oþer mennys wele
¶ And glad is of his sorowe and vnhele 116
The doctoure makeþ þis descripcioun
This maide went' on a day into þe toun
Toward þe temple wiþ her modere dere [leaf 213]
As is of yonge maidens þe manere 120
Now was þer a Iustice in þe toune
þat' gouernere was of þat' Regioun
And so bifelle þis Iuge his eyen cast'
Vppon þis mayde avisinge hir' ful fast' 124
As she came forþe by þere þe Iuge stood.
Anon his hert' chaungeþ *and* his mood.
So was he kauȝt' wiþ þe bewte of þis maide
And to him silf ful priuely he saide 128
This maide shal be myn for eny man.
Anoñ þe feende into his hert' ran
And tauȝt' him sodeynly by what' sclȝt'
The maide to his purpoos wynne he myȝt' 132

ffor certis by no force ne by no mede
Him þouȝt' he was not' able forto spede.
ffor he was stronge of freendes *and* eke she
Confeermed was in such souereyn bewte 136
þat' wel he wist' he myȝt her neuere wynne
As forto make here wiþ hur' body synne
ffor whiche wiþ grete deliberacio*un*
He sent' after a clerk into þe toune. 140
þe whiche he knewe for subtile or for bold
This Iuge vnto þis clerk' his tale haþ told
In secre wise and made him to assure
He shulde telle it' to no creature. 144
And if he did he shulde lese his hede
whan assented was þis cursed rede
Glad was þe Iuge and made glad chere
And ȝaue hy*m* ȝiftes precious *and* dere 148
whan shapen was all þis conspiracie
ffrom poynt' to poynt' how þat' þis lecherie
P*er*fourmed shulde be ful sotelly
And ȝe shul here afterward openly 152
Home gooþ this clerk' þat' hiȝt' Claudius
This fals Iuge þat' hiȝt' apius
So was his name for it' is no fable
But' knowen for an historial þing' notable. 156
The sentence of hit' soþ is out' of dowte [leaf 213, back]
This fals Iuge goþ nowe fast' aboute
To hasten his delit' and þat' he may
And so bifelle sone after on a day. 160
This fals Iuge as telleþ vs þe story
As he was wo*n*ned in his consistorie
And ȝaf his doomes vpon sondrie caas
This fals Clerk came forþ a wel good paas. 164
And saide lord if þat' it' be ȝoure wille
As doþ me riȝt' vpon þis pitous bille
In whiche I pleyn vpon Virginius.
And ȝif þat' he wol sayn it' is nat' þus 168

I wiȽ proue it and fynde good wittnesse
þat' soþe is þat' my bille wil expresse
þe Iuge answerde of þis in his absence
I may not' ȝeue diffinitif sentence 172
Lat' doon hy*m* calle *and* I wiȽ gladly here
þou shalt' haue riȝt' and no wronge here
Virginius came to witte þe Iuges wille
And riȝt' anoon was rad þis cursed bille 176
¶ The sentence of hit' was as ȝe shul here
To ȝowe my lord sir' Apius so dere
Sheweþ ȝour poor s*eruau*nte Claudius
How þat' a knyȝt' called Virginius 180
Aȝeinst' þe lawe aȝeinst' al equite
Holdeþ expresse aȝeinst' þe wille of me.
My seruaunt' which þat' is þral be riȝt'
Which from myn hous was stolen on a nyȝt' 184
þe whiles she was ful ȝenge I wil it preue
By witnesse lord so þat' ȝe ȝou nat' greue
She is nat' his douȝtere what' so he saye
wherfore my lord þe Iuge to ȝou I praye 188
ȝeelde me my thraȽ if þat' it' be ȝour' wille
loo þis was alle þe sentence of þe bille
Virginius gan vpon þe clerk biholde
¶ But' hastely er he his tale tolde 192
he wold haue defended it' as shuld' a knyȝt'
And by witnesse of mony a trewe wiȝt'
That' al was fals þat' saide his adu*er*sarie [leaf 214]
This cursed Iuge wold' no lenger tarye 196
Ne here oon woord' more of Virgyneus
But' ȝaf his Iugement' and saide þus.
I deme anoon þis clerk his s*eruau*nte haue
Thow shalt' no longer in þine hous hir' saue 200
Goo bringe hir' forþ and put' hur in our warde
This Clerk' shal haue his praȽ þus I awarde
And whan þis worþi knyȝt' Virgineus
Thorgh þe assent' of þe Iuge Apius 204

Most' by force his dere douȝtere ȝeuen
Vnto the Iuge in lecchery to lyuen.
He gooþ hym home and sette hy*m in* his halle
And lete anoon his deer douȝter' calle. 208
And wiþ a face dede as asshen colde
Vpon her humble face he can biholde
Wiþ faders pite stikyng' þorgh his h*er*te
Al wold he nat' from his p*ur*poos *conuer*te 212
Doughtere q*uod*' he Virginea be þi name
þer bene twoo weies. oiþ*er* deþ oiþer shame
þat' thow most' suffre allas þat' I was bore
ffor neuer þou deseruedest' wherfore 216
To dyen wiþ a sweerd or wiþ a knyf'
O dere douȝter ender of my lif
Whicĥ I haue fostred vp wiþ sucĥ plesaunce
þat' þou ne were out' of my remembrau*n*ce 220
O doughtere whicĥ þat' art' my last' woo.
And in lif my last' Ioie also
O gemme of chastite i*n* pacience
Take þou þi deþ for þis is my sentence 224
ffor loue and nat' for hate þou most' be dede
My pitous honde mote smyten of þine hede
Allas þat' euer Apius þe say
Thus haþ he falsly Iuged þe to day 228
And tolde hur' al þe caas as ȝe bifore
Haue herd it' nedeþ telle it' no more
Mercy dere fadere q*uod*' þis maide
And wit' þat' word' she boþ hur*e* armes laide. 232
Aboute his nek as she was wo*n*ned to doo [leaf 214, back]
þe teeres brosten out' of her eyen twoo
A[n]d saide good fadere shal I dye
Is þere no grace is þer no remedye 236
No certes dere douȝter myn q*uod*' he.
Than ȝeue me leue fader myn q*uod*' she.
My deþ [for] to compleyn a litel space
ffor parde Ieffa ȝaue his douȝtere g*race* 240

ffforto compleyn er he her selouȝe alas.
And god it' woot' no þing' was his t*re*spas
But' þan she ranne her fader first' to see
To welcome him wiþ grete solempnite 244
And wiþ þat' word' she felle a swo*u*n anoñ
And aftere whan her swownyng' was agoñ
She riseþ vp and to her fadere saide
Blessed be god þat' I shal die a maide 248
ȝeue me my deeþ er þat I haue a shame
Doþ wiþ ȝoure childe ȝour' wille a goddys name
And wiþ þat' word she preieþ [him] ful oft'
That' wiþ his swerde he shuld smyte her soft' 252
And wiþ þat' woord' in swowne doune she felle
Hur' fadere wiþ ful sorowful hert' *and* felle
Hure hede of smote and by þe top it' hent'
And to the Iuge he ȝaue it' to present' 256
As he satte in his doome i*n* consistorie
And whan þe Iuge it' seie as seiþ þe storie
He bad take him and honge hy*m* also fast'
But' riȝt' anoon al þe puple in þrast' 260
To saue þe knyȝt' for rewþe *and* for pite
ffor knowen was þe fooles iniquite
The puple anoon had suspecte i*n* þis þinge
By manere of þis clerkes chalengynge 264
þat' it' was by þassent' of Apius.
Þei wist' wel þat' he was lecherus
ffor whiclh vnto þis Apius þei goñ
And casten hy*m* in prison riȝt' anōn 268
Wher as he sclough hy*m* self *and* Claudius
Þat' Seru*au*nte was vnto þis Apius
Was demed forto honge vpon a tree [leaf 215]
But' Virginius of his grete pite 272
Preide for hym þat' he was exiled'
And ellis certys he had be begiled'
The remenant' were honged more *and* lesse
þat' consented were to þis cursednesse / 276

Here may men see howe synne haþ his merite
Be ware for no man woote how god wil smyte
In no degree ne in which manere wise
þe worme of conscience wil arise. 280
Of wicked lif þough it so prive be
þat no man woote of it. but god and hee
Where he be lewde man or lered
He note howe sone he may be afered. 284
Therfore I rede ȝou this counsel take
ffforsakeþ synne er synne ȝou forsake

|| **The prologe of þe Pardonere.**

Our hoost gan swere as he were woode
Harowe quod he by nailles and by blood 288
This was a cursed þeef a fals Iustise
As shameful deeþ as herte can deuise.
Come to þe Iustise and her aduocas.
Aigates þis sely wo*m*man is sclayn alas. 292
Allas dere abou3te she bewtee.
Wherfore I say alday þat' man may se
That' 3ift' of fortune or of nature
Bene cause of deþ of mony a creature 296
[Hir' beaute was hir' deth I dar' well sayn. [Harl. 1758, *on leaf* 150, *back*]
Allas so pitously as sche was slayn.]
As boþ 3iftes as I speke of nowe
Men han ful oft' more harme þa*n* prowe 300
But' trewly myne owne maist*er* dere
This is a pitous tale for to here
But' naþelees passe ouer is no fors
I prey to god to saue þi gentile cors / 304
And þine vrynales and þi Iordaus
þine ypocras and eke þi Galyans
And euery box ful of þi letwarye
God blesse hem and our' lady seint' Marye 308
So mote I the þou art a p*ro*pre man.
And like a prelate by seynt' Runyan.
Saue þat' I can not speke wel in terme [leaf 215, back]
But' wel I woote þou doost' myn hert' eerme 312
That' I haue almost' kaught' a Cardyacle
By corps boones but' I haue triacle
Or ellis a drau3t' of moist' or corny ale
Or but' I here anoon a mery tale 316

GROUP C. § 2. DOCTOR-PARDONER LINK. **Petworth MS.**

My hert' is lost' for pite of þis maide
þowe belamy Iohñ p*ar*donere he saide
Telle vs some merþe or Iapes riȝt' anōn
he shal be done quod he be seynt' Runyoñ 320
But' furst' quod he here at' þe next' ale stake
I wil boþ drink' and ete of a cake
But' riȝt' anoñ þise gentiles goñ to crye
Nay lat' hym telle vs of no Rybaudrye. 324
Telle vs some moral þing' þat' we may lere
Som*m*e witte and þan wil we gladly here
I graunt' Iwis quod he but' I mote þink'
Vpon som honest' þinge whiles þat' I drink' / 328

¶ **Thus endeþ þe prologe of þe p*ar*doner.**

And here bygynneþ the tale. [*on leaf* 215, *back*]

Loldingges quod he in church̄ wha*n* I p*r*eche ¶ The tale
I peyn me to haue an hautyñ speche
I ryng' it' out' as rounde as goþ a belle
ffor I can al by roote þat' I telle 332
My teeme is alway oon and euere was.
Radix om*nium* malor*um* est' cupiditas.
ffirst' I pronou*n*s whennys þat I come
And þan my bulles schewe aH and some / 336
Our liege lordes seel on my patent'
þat' shewe I furst' my body to warent'
That' no man be so bolde preest' ne clerk'
Me to distrowbe of cristes holy werk' 340
And after þat' telle I forþ my tales
Bulles of popes and of Cardynales.
Of pat*r*iarkes and bisshoppes I shewe.
And in latyn I speke a wordys fewe 344
To sauer wiþ my predicacioñ
And forto stirre men to deuocioñ
Than shewe I forþ my longe cristal stones [leaf 216]
Ycrommed ful of clowtes and of bones. 348
Relikes þei bene as wene men echoñ
þan haue I in laton a sholdere bone
Which̄ þat' was an holy Iwes shepe
Good men say I take at' my wordes kepe 352
ȝif þat' þis boon be wasshen in a welle
ȝif kowe or calf. shepe or oxe swelle
þat' eny worme hath ete or stonge
About' þe hert' or ellis þe longe 356

It' is hool anon and ferþermore
Of pokkes and of scabbe *and* of eu*er*y sore
Shal euery shepe be hool þat' of þis welle
Drynkeþ a drauȝt take hede what' I telle 360
ȝif þat' þe good man þat' þe beest' oweþ
Wil euery weke er þat' þe Cok hy*m* croweþ
ffastinge drink' of þis welle a drauȝte.
As þilk' holy Iwe our' eldere tauȝte 364
His beestees and his stoor shal multiplie
And sirs also it' heleþ Ialowsie
And þouȝe a man be fallen in a Ialous rage
Lat' maken wiþ þis watere his potage 368
And neuer shal he [more] his wif mystrust'
þouȝe he þe soþ of hur*e* defaute wost'
Al had she taken · preestes tweyn · or þree
Here is a myten eke þat' ȝe may see 372
He þat' his honde wil putte in þis myteyn
He shal haue multiplyinge of his greyn
Whan he haþ sawen be it' whete or otys
So þat' he bringe me good pans or ellis grotys. 376
And men and wo*m*men · oo þing' I warne ȝowe
ȝif eny wiȝt' be in þis churche nowe
þat' haþ doo synne horrible [so] þat' he
Dar not' for shame of it' shryuen be 380
Or eny wo*m*man be she ȝong' or olde
That' haþ made her husbonde Cukwold
Suche folk' shal haue no power ne no grace
To offre to my relikes in þis place. 384
And who so findeþ hym out' of such blame [leaf 216, back]
Thei wil come vp and offre in goddis name
And I assoille hym by þe autorite
Such as my bulle was graunted to me 388
By þis gaude haue I wo*n*nen euery ȝeer*e*
An .C. Mark siþens I was p*ar*donere.
I stonde like a clerk' in my pulpitte
And schewe lewde puples synne ysette 392

I preche so as I haue lered by-fore
And telle an hundred Iapes more.
Than peyne I me to streche forþ þe necke
And eest' and west' vppon þe puple I bekke 396
As doþ a dowue sitting' vppon a beerne
Myne hondes and my tunge goñ ful ȝeerne
þat' it' is ioye to see my bysynesse
Of auarice and suche cursednesse. 400
Is al my prechinge for to make hem free
To ȝeue her pans and namely vnto me
ffor myn entent' is nat' but' forto wynne
And noþinge for correctioñ of synne 404
I rekke neuere whan þat' þei bene buried
þouȝe þat' her saules goo o blakburied.
ffor certes mony a predicacioñ
Co*mm*eþ ofte tyme of euel entencioñ 408
So*mm*e of plesaunce of folk' and of flaterye
To bene au*au*nced by ypocresie
And som*me* for veynglorie and for hate
ffor whan I dar nat' oþer waies debate 412
Than wil I stynge hem wiþ my tunge smerte
In prechinge so that' he shal not' sterte
To bene defamed falsely so þat' he
haþ trespased to my breþeren or to me 416
ffor þouȝe I telle nat' his p*ro*pre name
Men shal wel knowe þat' it is þe same
By som*me* signe and oþer circu*m*stauncs
Thus smyte I folk' þat' doñ vs displesauncs. 420
Thus spitte I out' my venyme vnder hwe
Of holynesse to semen holy and trewe
But' shortely myne entent' I wil devise ./ [leaf 217]
I preche of no þinge but' of Couetise ./ 424
Þerfore my teeme is ȝit' and euer was
Radix om*nium* malor*um* est cupiditas
Thus can I preche aȝeinst' þe same vice
Whicñ þat' I vse and þat' is Auarice 428

But' þouȝe my self be giltif in þat' synne.
ȝit' can I make oþer folk' to wynne
ffrom auarice and soor hem repent'
But' þat' nys not' my principal entent' 432
I preche nat' but' for coueityse
Of þis matere it' ouȝt' ynowe suffise
Than telle I hem ensamples mony oon̄
Of olde stories longe tyme agon̄ 436
ffor lewde puple louen tales olde
which̄ þingges þei conne report' and hold'
What' trow ȝe þe whiles I may preche
And wynne gold and siluere forto teche 440
þat' I wil lyve in pouert' wilfully
Nay nay I þouȝt' it' neuere trewly.
ffor I wil preche and begge in sondry londys
I nyl do no laboure wiþ my hondes. 444
Ne make basket*tes* for to lyve þer-by
Because I wil not' lyuen ydelly
I wil noon of þe apostels counterfete
I wil haue money. malt' chees *and* whete 448
Al were it' ȝeuen of þe poorest' page
Eyþere of þe poorest' wydowe in a vilage
Al shulde her children sterue or famyne
And I wil drink þe licourest' of þe wyne 452
And haue a ioly wenche in euery toune
But' harkeneþ lordes in conclusio*un*
ȝoure liking' is þat' I shal telle a tale
Now haue I dronken. a drauȝt' of corny ale 456
By god I hope I shal tel ȝou a þinge
þat' shal of reson be at' ȝoure likinge
ffor þouȝe my self be a vicious man
I morale tale ȝit' I ȝou telle can. 460
Whiche Iames went' to p*r*eche forto wynne. [leaf 217, back]
Now holdeþ ȝoure pees my tale I wil bygynne.

In ffllanndres whilom was a companye [*on leaf* 217, *back*]
Of yonge folk þat' haunted folye 464
As hasard' Riot' / stewes . *and* tauernes .
Harpes . Rubibes . lutes and giternes .
Þei dauncen and pleyen at' þe dys nyȝt' *and* day
and Eten also ouer þat' her myȝt' may 468
Thorgh whiche þei do þe deuel sac*r*ifise
Wiþ-in þe deuels temple in sondry wise
By sup*er*fluite abhominable
Her oþes bene so grete *and* damnable 472
Þat' it' is grisly forto here hem swere
Our blessed lordys body þei to-tere
Hem þouȝt' þe Iwes rent' hy*m* nat' ynowe
And ilk' of hem at' oþer synne loowe 476
And riȝt' anoñ co*m*men Inne þan tomblesters
ffetys and smale and ȝong' fruters
Syngers wiþ harpes . bawdes *and* waifrers
Such̃ bene verrey þe deuels officers . 480
To kyndel and blowe þe fyre of leccherye
That' is annexed [vn]to glotenye
The holy writt' take I to witnesse
Þat' lecherie is in wyne *and* dronknesse 484
¶ Lo howe þat' dronken Loth̃ vnkindely ¶ nolite i*n*eb*r*iari vino i*n* quo es*t* lux*uria*
Lay by his douȝters two vnwittyngly
So dronken he was he nyst' what' he wrouȝt'
Herodes who so haþ þe stories souȝt' 488
[. . . . . .
. . . . . *no spurious lines in this MS.*]

whan he of wyne was replete at' his feest' 489
Riȝt' at' his owne table ȝaf his heest
To sleen þe baptist' Iohñ ful giltelees
Senec' saiþ a good word' doutelees. ¶ Seneca 492
He seiþ he can no difference fynde
Betwix a man þat' is out' of his mynde
And a man þat' is dronklewe
But' þat' woodenesse is fallen in a shrewe 496
Perseuereþ lenger þan doþ dronknesse
O gloteny ful of Cursednesse.
O cause furst' of our' confusioñ [leaf 218]
Oryginal of our dampnacioñ 500
Til crist' had bouȝt' vs wiþ his blood agayñ
Lo how dere shortely forto sayne
Abouȝt' was þe Cursed vilanye ¶ Ieronymus contra Iouinianum Quamdiu ieiunauit adam in paradiso · fuit. Comedit & eiectus est statim
Corrupte was as þis world' þorgh glotenye
Adam oure fadere *and* his wif also
ffrom paradis to labour and to woo
Were driven for þat' wise it' is no drede
ffor whiles þat' adam fasted as I rede 508
He was in paradys and whan þat' hee
Ete of þe fruyte defended on þe tree ·
Anoon he was out' cast' to woo & peyne
O glotenye on þe wel ouȝt' vs pleyne 512
O wist' a man how mony maladyes
ffoloweþ of excesse and of glotonyes
He wolde bene þe more mesurable
Of his diete sitting' at' his table 516
Allas þe short' þrote þe tender mouþe
Makeþ þat' Est' and West' norþe & souþe
In êrthe in eire in watere men to synk'
To geten a gloton deynte mete *and* drink' 520
Of þis matere o poule wel cast' þou trete
Mete vnto wombe and wombe eke vnto mete
Shal god distroie boþ as Powle seiþ
Allas a foule þinge it' is be my feiþ. 524

To saie þis worde and foulere is þe dede
Whan men so drinken of þe white *and* rede
þat' of his þrote he makeþ his p*r*iuee
Thorgh̃ þilk' cursed Sup*er*fluite 528
þe Apostel wepinge seiþ ful pitously
þer walken mony of which̃ tolde haue I
I saie it' nowe weping' wiþ pitous vois
þer bene enemyes of cristes croys 532
Of whiche þe eende is deþ. Wombe is her god
O woombe o baly. o stynking' cod.
ffulfilled of donge. and of corrupciõn
At' eiþer eende of þe foule is þe sesoñ 536
Howe grete cost' and labour is to fynde [leaf 218, back]
Thise Cokes howe þei stampe streyne *and* grynde
And turnen substañce into accident'
To ffulfille alle þe likerous talent' 540
Out' of þe hard bones knokke þei
þe mary for þei cast' nat' away
þat' may goo þorgh þe golett' sauf' *and* soote
Of spicery of leeues berk' and roote 544
Shal bene his sause ymade be delite
To maken hy*m* ȝit' a newe appetite
But' certes he þat' haunteþ suche delices
Is dede whiles þat' he lyueþ in þoo vices 548
A lecherous þinge is wyne *and* dronknesse
It' is ful of strivinge and of wrecchednesse
O dronken man disfigured in þi face
ffoule is þi breeþ foule art' þou to enbrace 552
And þorgh̃ þi dronken nose souneþ þ^e^ so*u*ne
As þouȝe þou seidest ay Sampson Sampso*u*n
And ȝit' god woot sampson dronk neu*er*e no wyne
þow fallest' as it' were a dronken swyne 556
þi tunge is lost' and alle þine honest' Cure
ffor drunknesse is verray sepulture
Of mannys witte and his discrecioñ
In whoom þat' drink' haþ dominacioñ 560

He can no counsaile kepe it is no dredo
Nowe kepe ȝou from þe white *and* fro þe rede
Namely from þe white wyne of lepe
þat is to selle in fisshstrete *and* in chepe 564
This wyne of spayn crepeþ subtilly
In oþer wynes growinge faste by
Of woche riseth suche fumosite
þat whan a man haþ dronke a drauȝt or þre 568
And weneþ þat he be at home in chepe
þan is he in spayn riȝt at þe toune of lepe
Nouȝt at the rocheH ne at burdeux toun
And þan wil þei say . Sampson sampsoun 572
But harkeneþ lordingges oo þing I ȝou pray
þat alle þe souereyn actes dar I say
Of victories in olde testament [leaf 219]
þat þorghe verrey god þat is omnipotent 576
Weren doon in abstinence *and* in preiere
Lokeþ þe bible and þer ȝe may it lere
Lokeþ Attila þe grete conquerour
Deide in his sclepe wiþ shame *and* dishonour 580
Bledinge at his nose in dronknesse
A Captayn shuld live in sobrenesse
And ouer al þise avise ȝow riȝt weH
What was comaunded vnto lamueH 584
Not Samuel but lamuel say .I. ¶ Noli vinum dare
Redeþ þe bible and fyndeþ it expresly
Of wyne ȝeuynge of hem þat aren Iustise
No more of þis for it may suffise 588
And now þat I haue spoken of glotenye
Nowe wil I defende ȝou hasardye
¶ Hasard is verrey modere of lesingges ¶ Policratici [Jo. Sarisburiensis] libro .i. mendaciorum & periuriarum mater est alea
And of disceite cursed forswerynges
Blaspheme of crist mansclaughter and waast also/
Of bataile and of tyme and of ferþermoo
It is repreef and contrarie to honoure
fforto be holden a comon hasardoure 596

And euer þe hier he is of estate
The more he is holden desolate
ȝif þat' a prince vse hasardie
In al gouernance and polecye 600
He is as by comon opinioñ
Holde þe lasse in reputacioñ
¶ Stilboon *þat'* was holde a wise embassato*ur* ¶ Stilboñ .i. Me*curius*.
Was sent' into Corinthñ w*ith* grete hono*ur*.
ffro Calidoyne to make hem alliañce
And whan he came happed þis chañce
And al þe grettest' þat' were of þat' lond
Pleiyng' at' þe hasard he hem fond 608
ffor which as sone as þat' myȝt be
He stale hym home aȝein to his cuntre
And saide þere I wold not' lese my name
I wold nat' take on me so gret' diffame. 612
fforto allye ȝou to noon hasardours ·/ [leaf 219, back]
Sendeþ oþer wiser embassatours ./
ffor by my trouþe me were leuere dye
þan I shuld . ȝow to hasardours allie 616
But' ȝe þat' bene so glorious in hon*oure*s.
Shal not allie ȝou wiþ hasardoures .
As by my wille ne as by my trete
This wis philisophre þus seide hee 620
Loke eeke þat' to þe kinge Demetreus
The kyng' of partes as þe booke seiþ þus
Sent' hym a paire of golden dys in scorne
ffor he had vsed hasardrie þer byforne 624
ffor whiche he heelde his glorie and his reno*un*
ffor no value of reputacio*un*
lordes myght' fynde oþer manere playe
Honest' ynowe to dryue þe day awaye 628
Now wil I speke of oþes fals *and* grete
A worde or twoo as oþer bookes entrete.
Grete sweringe is a þing' abhominable
And fals sweringe is moche more reproueable 632

The highe god forbere sweryng' at' alle ¶ Nolite omnino iurare
Witnesse of mathewe but' in speciall
Of swerynge [seiþ] þe holy Ieremye. ¶ Ieremie .4º Iurabis inquit in veritate in iudicio & iusticia
Thowe shalt' swere soþe þine oþes *and* not' lie
And swere in doome and eke in riȝtwisnesse
But' ydel sweringe is a cursednesse
Biholde and see þat' in þe first table.
Of hie goddes heestes honurable 640
How þat' twoo heestes of hym is þis
Take not' my tale in ydelnes amys
Loo raþer he forbedeþ such sweryngc
Than homicide or eny oþer þinge. 644
I saie as þus by order it' stondeþ
This knowen þat' heestes vnderstondeþ
How þat' þe Secounde heest of god is þat
And ferþer ouer I wil þe telle al plat' 648
þat' vengeance shal not' part' from his hous
þat' of his oþes is so outrageous.
By goddys precious hert' and his nailles [leaf 220]
And by his blood þat' is in hailles 652
Seuen is my chaunce and his .v. *and* thre
By goddys armes ȝif þou falsly plaie me
This daggard shal þorgh þine hert' goo.
This fruite commeþ of þilk bones twoo. 656
ffor-sweringe Ire falsenesse homyside
Now for þe loue of crist' þat' for vs dyde
Leueþ ȝoure oþes bothe grete and smale
ffor I shal telle ȝou a mervelous tale / 660
Thise Riotours of which I telle.
Longe erste er prime. ronge eny belle
Were sette in a tauerne for to drynke
And as þei satte þei herd a belle chink' 664
Byforn a corps was caried to his graue
þat' oon of hem can calle to his knaue /
Goo bette quod he and aske redely
What' coors is þat' þat' passeþ forþ by 668

And loke þat' þou report' his name weH
Sire quod þis [knaue] it' nedeþ neuer a deH
It was me tolde eer ȝe came heer two houres
He was p*ar*de an olde felawe of ȝoures 672
Al sodeynly was he sclayn to-nyȝt'
ffor-dronken as he satte vpon his benchh vpriȝt'
Ther come a prive þeef men clepen deþe
þat' in his contray al þe puple sleeþ 676
And wiþ his speer he smote his hert' atwoo
And went' his way wiþ-oute wordes moo
He haþ a thousand sclayn þis Pestilence
And maistere er ȝe come in his presence 680
Me þenkeþ þat' it' were necessarie
ffor to be war of suchh an adu*er*sarie
Beeþ redy forto mete hy*m* euermore
Thus tauȝt' me my dame I saye no more 684
¶ By seint' marye saide þis tauernere
þe Childe seiþ sooþ for he haþ sclayn to ȝere
hens ouer a myle wiþ-Inne a grete vilage
Bothh man and wo*m*man childe *and* page. 688
I trowe his habitaciou*n* be þere [leaf 220, back]
To bene avised grete wisdome it' were
Er þat' he did a man dishonoure
ȝe goddes armes quod þis Riatour*e* 692
Is it' suche perile wiþ hy*m* forto mete
I shal hym sechen by stie and by strete
I. make a vowe by goddys digne bones.
Harkeneþ felawes we þre bene al ones. 696
Lat' eche of vs holde vp his honde to o*þer*e
And eche of vs bycome oþers broþer
And we wil slee þis fals traito*ur* deþe
He shal be slayne he þat' so monye sleeþe 700
By goddys dignite er it' be nyȝt'
To-gidere han þise þre her hertes pliȝt'.
To lif and to dye ilk' of hem wiþ oþer
As þouȝe he were his owne born broþer 704

And vp þei sterten and dronken in þis rage.
And forþ þei goon towardes þat vilage
Of whicħ þe tauernere haþ spoke byforne
And mony a grisly oo þe han þei sworne 708
And cristes blessed body þei to-rent'
þat' deeth shal be dede if we may hy*m* hent'
Whan þei han goon nat' fully a myle
Riȝt' as þei wold' haue troden ouer a stile 712
An olde and a poor man wiþ he*m* mette
This olde man ful mekely hem grette
And saide þus nowe lordes god ȝou see
þe Prowdest' of þise Riatours thre 716
Answerde aȝein what' cherlde wiþ harde *grace*
Why art' þou al forwrapped sauf þi face
Whi lyuest' þou so longe in so grete age
This olde man gan loke in his visage 720
And seide þus for I can nat' fynde
A man þouȝe I walked into Ynde
Neiþer in Cite ne in noon vilage
þat' wil chaungen his ȝouþe for myñ age 724
And þerfore mote I haue myn age stille
As longe tyme as it is goddys wille /
Ne deth̄ allas nyl not' haue my lif' [leaf 221]
Thus walk I like a restlees catif 728
And on þe grounde whicħ is my moder' gate
I knokke wiþ my staf erly and late
And saie leue moder lat' me Inne
Loo howe I vanysshħ flesshħ blood *and* skynne 732
Allas whan shul my bones bene at' reste
Modere withħ ȝou wold I chaunge my chest'
That' in my chambere longe tyme haþ be.
ȝe for an heeren cloute to wrappe me 736
But' ȝit' to me she wil nat do þat grace.
ffor whiche ful welked is my face
And sirs to ȝou it' is no curtesie
To speken vntil an olde man vilany 740

But' he trespase in word or ellis *in* dede
In holy writte ȝe may ȝoure self wel rede
¶ Aȝeinst an ōolde man hoor vpon his hede ¶ Coram canuto capite consurge.
ȝe shuld arise þerfor I ȝeue ȝou rede 744
Ne doþ vnto and olde man harme as nowe
No more þan ȝe wolde a man did ȝowe
In age if þat' ȝe so longe abide
And god be wiþ ȝow wheder ȝe goo or ride 748
I mote goo þidere as I haue to goo
We nay olde cherle by god þou shalt' nat' soo.
Seyde þise oþer hasardours anone
Thow partest' nat' so liȝtly be seynt' Iohn 752
Thow spak' riȝt' now of þilk' trato*ur* deþe
þat' in þis cuntre alle our frendes sleeþe
Haue here my trouþe as þou art' his aspie
Telle wher he is or ellis þou shalt' dye 756
By god and by þe holy sacrament'
ffor soþly þou art' [on] of his assent'
To scleen vs ȝenge folk' þou fals þeef
Nowe sirres if it' be to ȝou so leef 760
To fynde deþ turne vp þis croked way
ffor in þat' groue I left' hy*m* be my fay
Vnder a tree and þere he wil abide
Ne for ȝoure boost' he nyl hy*m* no þinge hide 764
See ȝe þat' ooke riȝt' þere ȝe shul hy*m* fynde [leaf 221, back]
God saue ȝou þat' bouȝt' aȝein mankynde
And ȝou amende þus saide þis olde man
And euery of þise Riatours ranne 768
Til þei come to þe tree *and* þer þei fonde
ffloreyns of gold fyne. ykoyned rounde
Wel nyghe a seuen busshells as he*m* þouȝt'
No lenger than aftere deþ þei souȝt' 772
But' eche of hem so glad was of þat' syȝt'
ffor þat' þe floreynes so faire be and briȝt'
That' doune þei sette hem by þe precious hoorde
The worst' of hem he spak' þe furst word 776

Breþeren quod he take hede what' I say
My witte is grete þough̃ I bourde *and* play
This tresour haþ fortune to vs ȝeuen
In myrþe and iolite our lyf to lyuen 780
And lightly so as it' co*m*meþ so wil we spende
Ey precious goddys hert' who wende
To-day þat' we shulde haue so faire a grace
But' myȝt' þis gold be caried fro þis place 784
Home into myn*e* hous or ellis to ȝoures
ffor wel I woote þat' alH̃ þis gold̃ is oures/
Than were we in high̃ ffelicite.
But' trewly by day it' may nat' be 788
Men wold say þat' we were þeues stronge
And for oure owne tresour' done vs honge
As wisely and as sclizly as it' myȝt'
This tresour most' ycaried be be nyȝt' 792
Wherfore I rede lat' loke among' vs all*e*
To drawe and lat' see where þe Cut wil falle
he þat' haþ þe curt' wiþ hert*e* blith̃
Shal renne to toune and *þat'* ful with̃ 796
To bringe vs brede and drink' ful p*r*iuely
And two of vs shal kepen sotilly
This tresour wel and if he wil not' tarie
Whan it' is nyȝt' we wil þis tresor carie 800
By oon assent' where as vs likeþ best'
That' oon of ham broȝt' gras *in* his fest'
And bad hem drawe and loke wher it wolde falle [leaf 222]
And it' felle on the ȝongest' of hem all*e* 804
And forþ toward̃ þe towne he went' anoon
And also sone as that he was goone
That' oon of hem spak' vnto *þat* o*þer*e
Thowe woost' wel þou art' myn owne sworn bro*þer*e 808
Thi prophite wil I telle þe anoñ
Thowe woost' wel þat' our' felawe is gooñ
And here is gold̃ and þat' grete plente
þat' shal departed be amonges vs þree 812

But' naþelees if I can shape it' soo
þat' it' departed were amonges vs twoo
Had I not' done a frendes t*ur*ne to þe
þat' oþer Answered I not' howe þ*at*' my3t' be 816
I wold wel þat' þe gold were oures twoo.
What' shuld' wee doo þat' it' my3t be soo.
Shal it' be counsaile said þe first' schrewe
And I shal telle [þe] in wordes fewe 820
What' we shul doon and bringe it' aboute
I graunt' quod þat' oþer out' of doute
That' by my trouþe I nyl þe nat' bywreien
Now quod the furst' þ*ou* woote wel we be tweyen 824
And twoo of vs shul strenger be þan oōn
loke whan he is sette and þat' anōn
Arise as þou3e þou woldest' wiþ hy*m* play
And I shal ryuen hy*m* þorgh þe sides twey 828
Whiles þat' þow strogelest' w*ith* hy*m* as i*n* game
And wiþ þi daggere loke þou doo þe same
And þan shal al þis golde dep*ar*ted be
My dere freende bytwixe þe and me 832
Than may we booþ our lustes fulfille
And play at' þe dice at' our owne wille
And þus accorded bene þise shrewes tway
To scleen þe þred as 3e han herd me say 836
¶ This 3ongest' which þat' went' to þe toune
fful oft' in his hert' rolled vp *and* doune
þe bewte of þise floreyns faire *and* bri3t'
O lord' quod he 3if it' so were I my3t' 840
Haue al þis tresour' to myself alone [leaf 222, back]
Ther nys no man þat' lyueþ vnder trone
Of golde þat' shuld lyve so mery as I
And at' þe last' þe feende oure enemye 844
Put' in his þou3t' þat' he shuld' poysen bey
wiþ which he my3t' scleen his felawes twey
ffor whi þe feende fonde him in such liuynge
That' he had leue hy*m* to sorowe bringe 848

ffor þis was vtterly his entent
To scleen hem boþe and neuere to repent
And forþ he goþ no lenger wold he tarye
Into þe towne vnto apotecarye 852
And preide hym þat he hym wolde selle
Somme poysen þat he myȝt his rattes kelle
And eke þer was a polcat in his hawe
þat as he seide his capons had Isclawe 856
And seide he wolk wreke hym ȝif he myȝt
On vermyn þat destroyen hem by nyȝt
The appoticarie answerd þou shalt haue
A þinge þat as god my saule saue 860
In al þis worlde þer nys no creature
þat ete or drink of þis confecture
Nouȝt but þe mountance of a corn of whete
þat he ne shal his lif anoon forlete 864
Ȝe sterue he shal and þat in lasse while
þan þow wilt goon a pace nat but a myle
This poysen þat is so hard *and* violent
This cursed man haþ in his honde it hent 868
This poysen in a boxe and siþens he ranne
Into þe nexte strete vnto a man
And borowed hym large botelles þre
And to his felawes aȝein repaireþ he 872
The iij. he kepte clene for his drinke
ffor alle þe nyȝt he shope hym forto swynk
In cariyng of þat gold out of þat place
And whan þis riotour wiþ sory grace 876
Had filled wiþ him his grete botels þre
To his felawes aȝein repaireþ he./
What nedeþ it to sermon þerof more [leaf 223]
ffor riȝt as þei had cast his deeþ byfore 880
Riȝt so þei han hym sclayn and *þat* anoñ
And whan þat þis was doon *þan* speke *þat* oñ
Now lat vs sitte and drink and make vs mery
And afterward we wil his body bery 884

And after þat hit' happed he*m* p*er*cas
To taken a botell wher-in the poyson was
And drank' and ȝaue his felawe drink' also þe
þorghe whiche anoon þei steruen bothe 888
But' certes I suppose þat' Auicen
Wroote neuer in no canon ne i*n* no fen
Moo wondere sorowes of empoysenynge
Thus had þise wrecches two her endinge 892
Thus eended be þise homycydes twoo
And eke þis false enpoysoner also
O. cursed synne ful of al cursednesse
O. traterous homycides .o. Wickednesse 896
O. glotenye luxurye and hasardrye
Thow blasphemo*ur* of c*r*ist wiþ vileny
And oþes grete of vsage and of p*r*ide
Allas mankinde howe may it' betide 900
That' to þi creato*ur* which þat' þe wrouȝt'
And wiþ his precious blood þe bouȝt'
Thowe art' so fals and so vnkynde allas
Now good men god forȝeue ȝou ȝo*ur* trespas 904
And kepe ȝou from þe synne of auarice
Myne holy p*ar*doñ may ȝou all warisshe
So that' ȝe offer nobles or sterlyngges
Oiþer ellis Siluere. spoones. broches. or ryngges 908
Boweþ ȝoure hede vnder þis bulle
Co*m*meþ vp ȝe Wyues offreþ ȝour wille
ȝoure name I entre here in my rolle anoñ
Iñ to þe blisse of heuene shul ȝe al goon 912
I ȝou assoille be my highe powere
ȝe þat' wollen offre as clene and eke as cleere
As ȝe were born and loo sirs þus I preche
And Ih*e*su crist' þat' is our saules leche. 916
So g*r*aunte ȝou his p*ar*don to receyue ./ [leaf 223, back]
ffor þat' is best' I wil ȝou not' deceyue
¶ But' sirs oon word forgate I in my tale
I haue relikes and p*ar*don in my male 920

As faire as eny man in engelond
Whiche were ȝeue me by þe popes hond
ȝif eny of ȝow wol of deuociõn
Offre and han myn absolucioñ 924
Commeþ forþ anon and kneleþ here adoun
þat ȝe may haue part of my pardoun
Or ellis takeþ pardon as ȝe wende
Al newe and fresh at euery tounes ende 928
So þat ȝe offre alway newe *and* newe
Nobles and pans which þat bene good and trewe
It is an honure to euery þat bene here
þat ȝe may haue a suffisañt pardonere 932
To assoile ȝou in contree as ȝe ride
ffor auentures which þat may be-tide
ffor parauenture þer may falle oon or twoo
Doune of her hors and breke her nek atwoo 936
Looke swiche a swerte it is to ȝou alle
That I am in ȝoure felawship yfalle
þat may assoile ȝou boþ more *and* lasse
Whan þat þe soule shal fro þe body passe 940
I rede þat hour [hooste] shal bygynne
ffor he is most enuolupte of synne
Come forþ sire hoost and offre first anoñ
And þou shalt kysse þe relikes euerechoñ 944
ȝe for a groot vnbokel anoñ þi purs
Nay nay quod he þan haue I cristes curs
lat be quod he it shal nat be so theche
þow woldest make me kissen þine olde breche 948
And swere it were þe relike of a seynt
þouȝe it were wiþ þi foundement depeynt
But by þe crosse which seint Elyne fonde
I wold I had þi culyons in myne honde 952
In stede of relikes of seint-wary
Lat kitte hem of *and* I wil helpe hem cary
They shulde be schryned in an hogges toord [leaf 224]
This Pardonere answered nat a woord 956

So wroþ he was he wolde no word say
Nowe quod our oostꝫ I nyl no lenger play
Wiþ þe ne wiþ noon oþer angry man
Butꝫ riȝtꝫ anoon þe worþi knyȝt bygan 960
Whan þatꝫ he seegh̃ þatꝫ alle þe puple louȝe
No more of þis for itꝫ is riȝtꝫ ynoghe
Sirꝫ Pardonere be mery *and* glad of chere
And ȝee sirꝫ Hoostꝫ þatꝫ bene to me so dere 964
I prei ȝou þatꝫ ȝe kisse þe Pardonere
And pardonere I prei ȝou drawe ȝe nere
And as we did latꝫ vs lauȝe and play
And anoñ þei kissed and riden forþ her way 968

¶ **Thus endeþ þe pardoners tale.**

And here bygynneþ

The prologe of Thoppas ¶ **The prologe**

[on leaf 224]

WHan saide was þis tale euery man
As sober was þat' wonder was to see
Til þat' our oost' Iape byganne
And þan at' erst' he loked vpon me .i. chaucers 1884
And saide þus what' man art þou quod he
Thow lokest' as þow woldest' fynde an hare
ffor euer vpon þe grounde I se þe stare 1887

¶ Approche nere and loke meryly
Now war ȝou sirs and lat' þis man han plas
He in þe waast' is shape as wel as I
This were a popet' in armes to embrace 1891
ffor eny wo*m*man smal and faire of faice
He semeþ Elnyssh̃ be his cunten*aun*ce
ffor vnto no wiȝt' doþ he daliaunce 1894

Say nowe somewhat siþens oþ*er*e folk han saide
Telle vs a tale of merth̃ and þat' anoñ
Oost' quod I ne be nat' euel paide.
ffor oþer tale certes can I noon. 1898
But' of a ryme I lered longe agoñ
ȝe þat' is good quod he shul we it here
Som deynte þing' me semeþ by his chere. 1901

[*No break in the MS, and no spaces between the stanzas above and after.*]

¶ Here bygynneþ be tale of chaucere by Sire Thopace.

¶ Capitulum xix^m ¶ Sire Thopace.

[*Fitte I.*]

LEstneth lordes in good entent' [leaf 224, back]
And I wiH telle verrement'
Of myrth[1] and of solace [[1] *in a later hand*] 1904
Of a kny3t' was faire and gent'
In bataile and in tornament'
His name was sir thopace. 1907

I-born he was in fer cuntree
In fflaunders al by3onde þe see
Att' Poperinge in þe place 1910
His fader was a man ful free
And lorde he was of þat' cuntre
As it' was goddes grace 1913

Sir' Thopas was a doughty swayñ
White was his face as payndemayñ
His lippes rede as Roos. 1916
His rudde is like scarlett' in grayñ
And I 3ow telle in good certayñ
He had a semely nose 1919

His heer his beerd was lik saffroñ
þat' to his girdel kau3t' adoune
His shoon of Cordewayne/ 1922
Of brugges were his hosen broun
His Roobe was of Ciclatoun
That' cost' mony a rayñ 1925

He couþe hunte at wylde dere
And Ride on hawkyng for þe Ryuer
Wiþ grey goshauke on honde 1928
Therto he was a good archere
To wrastling was þer noon his peer
Ther eny ram shulde stonde 1931

fful mony a maide briȝt *in* boure
þei morn for him *Par*amoure
Whan þei were bette to sclepe. 1934
But he was chaast *and* no lecchoure
And swete as is þe bremble floure
That bereþ þe reede heppe 1937

And so byfelle vppon a day
fior soþþe as I ȝowe telle may
Sire Thopaas wold out ride [leaf 225] 1940
He worþ vp on his stede gray
And in his honde a launce gay
A longe swerde be his side 1943

He prikkeþ þorowe a faire forest
Ther-in is mony a wilde beest
ȝa boþ bukke and hare 1946
And as he prikkeþ norþ and eest
I telle ȝowe hym had almest
By-tidde a sory care 1949

There springen herbes grete *and* smale
þe lykorice and þe Setuale
And mony a clowe gyloffre 1952
And notemuges to put in ale
Whebere it be moyst or stale
Or forto lay in Coffre 1955

þe birdes syngen it' is no nay
þe sp*ar*hauke and þe popeniay
þat' Ioie it' was to here 1958
The þrostel cok' made eke his lay
The woode douve vpon þe spray
She songe ful loude *and* clere/ 1961

Sire Thopas felle in loue longynge
And whan he hard' þe þrostel synge.
He prikkes as he were woode 1964
His faire stede in his prikkinge
So swette þat' men myȝt' hy*m* wringe
His sides were al blood' 1967

Sire Thopas eke so wery was
ffor prikkinge on þe soft' gras
So feers was his corage 1970
That' doune he laide hy*m* in þat' plas
To maken his stede som solas
ffor he was so Sauage 1973

O seint' Marie Benedicite
What' aileþ þis loue at' mee
To bynde me so sore 1976
Me dremed al þis nyȝt' p*ar*de
An Elfe quene shal my lem*m*an be [leaf 225, back]
And sclepe vndere my gore 1979

And elf quene wil I loue ywis
ffor in þis world' no wo*m*man is
Worþi to be my make 1982
in to*u*n
Al oþer wo*m*men I forsake
And to an elfe quene I me take
By dale *and* eke by doune 1986

Into his sadel he came anone
And prikkeþ ouere stile *and* stone
An helf quene forto aspie 1989
Til he so longe haþ riden and gooñ
That' he fonde in a privee wooñ
þe Cu*n*try of fary. 1992
¶ so wild'
ffor in þat' cuntre nas þ*er* noon
[. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
Neiþer wif ne child 1996

Til him þer come a Ioly geaunt'
His name was clepede Sir Olyfaunte
A perilous man of dede 1999
He seide childe by tirmagaunt'
But' ȝif þou prik' out' of myn haunt
Anoon I sclee þi stede. 2002
¶ wiþ mace
Here is þe quene of fairie
Wiþ harpe wiþ pipe and Simphony
Dwelling' in þis place 2006

The Childe saide so mot' I þee
To morowe wil I meten þee
Whan I haue myn Armure 2009
And ȝit' I hope p*ar* ma faye
þat' þou shalt' wiþ þis launcelay
Abien it' ful sore 2012
¶ Thorgh þ' mawe
Shal I perce ȝif I may
Er it' be fully prime of day
ffor here þow shalt' be sclawe 2016

GROUP B. § 8. SIR THOPAS. **Petworth MS.**

Sire Thopas drogh̄ a-bak ful fast'
This Geaunt' at' him stones cast'
Out' of a felle staf sclynge 2019
But' faire eskapeþ child' thopa
And al it' was þorgh̄ goddes *grace* [leaf 226]
And þorgh̄ his faire beringe 2022

ȝit' listneþ lordes to my tale
Murier þan þe nyȝtingale
ffor now I wil ȝou rowne 2025
Howe Sire Thopas wiþ sides smale
Prickinge ouer doune *and* dale
Is come aȝein to toune 2028

His mery men co*m*maunded he
To make hy*m* boþ game and glee
ffor nedes most' he fiȝt' 2031
Wiþ oon geaunt' wiþ hedes þre
ffor p*ar*amoure and Iolite
Of oon þat' shoon ful briȝt' 2034

Do come he seide myn menstralles
And geestours for to telle vs tales
Anon in myn armynge 2037
Of Romance þat' bene reales
Of popes and of cardynales
And eke of loue likynge 2040

þei fatte hy*m* first' þe swete wyne
[. . . . . .
. 2043
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
And licorice *and* eke comyne
Wiþ sugre þat' is cree 2046

He did next' his white leer
Of cloþ of lake fyne *and* clere
A breche and eke a sherte 2049
And next' his shert' an aketoñ
And ouer þat' an haberioñ
for peercyng' of an herte 2052

And ouer þat' a fyne hawberk
Was al ywrouȝt' of Iwes werk'
fful stronge it' was of plate 2055
And ouer þat' his cote armour
As white as is þe lily flour'
In which he wil debate 2058

His sheeld was of gold so rede
A þer-in was a bores hede
A charbocle by his side 2061
And þere he swore on ale *and* brede [leaf 226, back]
Howe þat' þe geaunt' shal be dede
Betide what' bytide 2064

His Iaumbeuxe were of [1]quirboile [1? *con*iurboile]
His sweerde scheeþ of yuory
His helme of laton briȝt' 2067
His sadel was of Rowel bone
His bridel as þe son*n*e shone
Or as þe moon liȝt' 2070

His spere was of fyne Cipres
That' bodeþ werre & no þing' pees
The hede ful sharpe ygrounde 2073
His stede was al dapple grey
It' goþ an aumble by þe wey
fful softely and rounde 2076

¶ In londe
Loo lordys myne here is a fitte
If ȝe wil eny more of it
To telle it wil I fonde 2080

[*Fitte* II.]

Now holde ȝoure mouth for charite
Boþ knyȝt and lady fre
And harkneþ to my spelle 2083
Of Bateh and of Chivalrie
And of ladies loue drurye
Anoon I wil ȝou telle 2086

Men speken of romances of price
Of horn childe and of ypotice
Of Befes and of sire gie 2089
Of Sy le boyx and Pleyndamour
But sire Thopace he bereþ þe flour
Of royal chyualrie 2092

His good stede he bystrode
And forþ vppon his way glode
As sparke out of þe brond 2095
Vpon his creest he bere a tour
And þer-Inne stiked a lilye flour
God shilde his corps fro shonde 2098

And for he was a knyȝt auntrous
He nolde sclepen in non hous /
But ligge in his hode [leaf 227]
His briȝt helme was his wongere
And by hym baite his deistrere
Of eerbes fyne and good. 2104

Hy*m* self drank watere of þe welle
As did þe kny3t sire percyvelle
So worþely vnder wede
[. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] 2108

NO more of þis for goddys dygnite
Quod our hoost' for þou makest' me
So wery of þi verrey lewdenesse
That' also wisly god my soule blesse 2112
Myn eeres aken of þi drasty speche
Now such̄ a ryme þe deuel I byteche
¶ This may wel be cleped ryme dogrel q*uo*d he
Whi so quod he whi wilt' þou lette me. 2116
More of my tale þan an oþer man
Siþ þat' it' is þe best' ryme þat' I can
By god quod he for pleynly at' a worde
Thi drasty rymyng' nys nat' worþ a torde 2120
Thow dost' not' ellis but' spendest' tyme
Sir*e* atte oon worde þou shalt' no lenger ryme
Lat' see wher þou canst tellen ou3t' in geeste
Or ellis in prose somewhat' at' þe leest' 2124
In whiche þer be som*me* mert̄h or doct*r*ine
Gladly quod I by goddys swete pyne
I wil 3ow telle a litel þinge in prose
þat' au3t' like 3ou as I suppose 2128
Or ellis certes 3e bene to daungerous
It' is a moral tale vertuous
Al be it' tolde somtyme *in* sondry wise
Of sondry folk' as I shal 3ou devise 2132
As þus 3e woote þat' euery eu*au*ngelist'
That' tellen vs þe peyn of Ih*e*su c*r*ist'
Ne seiþ al þing as his felawe dooþ
But' naþeles her sentence is all̄ sooþ. 2136
And al accorden as in her sentence
Al be þer in her tellyng' difference

ffor som*me* of hem seyn more and som*me* lesse [leaf 227, back]
Whan þei his pitous passiou*n* expresse 2140
I mene of mark' mathewe luke *and* Ioh̃n
But' doutelees her sentence is al oñ
Therfore lordynggs al I ȝou biseche
ȝif þat' ȝe þenk' I vary as i*n* my spech̃ 2144
As þus þouȝe þat' I telle somwhat' more
Of prouerbes þat' ȝe han herd byfore
Comp*re*hended in þis litel̃ tretys here
To enforsen wiþ þe effecte of my matere 2148
And þouȝe I not' þe same wordes say
As ȝe han herde ȝit to ȝou' al̃ I pray
Blameþ me nat' for in my sentence
Shul ȝe nowhere fynde difference 2152
ffro þe sentence of þis tretys lite
Aftere þe which̃ þis mery tale I write
And þerfor harkeneþ what' I shal say
And lat' me telle al my tale I pray 2156

¶ **Here endeþ þe tale of Sir Thopas**

[*No break in the MS.*]

GROUP **B.** § **10.** MELIBEUS. **Petworth MS.**

[*There are no line-numbers or breaks between the paragraphs in the MS. Tyrrhitt's breaks are kept here to prevent slight differences in the Six Texts throwing out many lines. Some of the omissions in the MS are supplied from the print of the French original in* Le Ménagier de Paris, ed. 1847, i. 186, *as that proves the omissions to be such.*]

[*Petworth MS, on leaf* 227, *back.*]

And here bygnneþ þe tale of Melebius & prudence.

[2157] A ȝong' man called Melebius myȝty and riche bygate vpon his wiff þat' called was Prudence a doughter' whiche þat' called was Sophie.

[2158] Vpo*n* a day byfelle: þat' he for his disporte is went' into þe feldes. him to play: [2159] his wif and his doughtere he haþ bylaft' in-*with* his hous. of whiche þe doores weren fast' shette. [2160] Ther of his olde fooen had espied. and satten ladders to þe walles of his hous. and by þe wyndowes bene entred. [2161] and bete his wiff and wounded his douȝter' wiþ .v. mortal woundes in .v. sondry places. [2162] This is to sayn in her feete. in her hondes. in her eeres. in her nose. and in her mouþe. and laften her' for dede. and wenten her way

[2163] Whan Melebius retourned was into his hous and segh al þis meschief. He like a mad man reending' his cloþes gan to wepe and crie.

[2164] ¶ Prudence his wiff as ferforþ as she durst'. bysouȝt' hy*m* of his weping' for to stynt'. [2165] but' not' forþi. he gan wepe *and* crye eu*ere* lenger þe more.

[2166] This noble wif prudence remembred her' vpon þe sentence of Ovide in his booke þat' cleped is þ^e^ remedy of loue. [1]De remedio Amoris. Where as he seiþ. [2167] He is a foole þat' distroubeþ þe modere to weepe in þe deeþ of her childe. til she haue wepte her fulle. as for a certeyn tyme. [2168] And þan shal man / doon his dyligence wiþ amyable chere hir' to recomforte *and* prei hyr' of

her wepinge forto stynt'. [2169] ffor which reson þis noble wiff Prudence suffred her husbonde forto wepe and crie as for a certeyn space. [2170] ¶ And whan she segh her tyme she saide to him in þis wise ¶ Allas my lord quod she whi maken ȝe ȝour' self forto [*sembler fol?* [2171] *Il n'appartient pas à sage homme de*] maken such a sorowe. [2172] ȝoure douȝtere with þe grace of god shal warissh and scape. [2173] And al were is so? þat' she riȝt' nowe were dede. ȝe ne auȝt' not' as for her deth ȝour self destroie. [2174] ¶ Senec' seiþ / þe wise man shal not' take to gret' discomfort' for þee deeþ of his children. [2175] but' certes he shuld suffre it' in pacience / as wel as he abideþ þe deeþ of his owne propre persone.

[2176] ¶ This Melebius answerd' anon and sayde. What' man quod he shulde of his weping' stent'. þat' haþ so grete a cause as I haue. [2177] .Ihesu our lord him self wepte for þe deeþ of lazarus his frende ¶ Qualiter Ihesus *christus* fleuit propter mortem Lazari. [2178] ¶ Prudence answerde. Certes wel I woot' attempre wepinge is no þinge defended to him þat' soroweful is. amonges folk in sorowe. but' it' is rather graunted hym to wepe. [2179] The Appostel paul vnto þe Romayns. Apostolus a Romanos writeþ. Man shal reioyse wiþ hem þat' maken Ioie. and wepe with suche folk as wepen: [2180] But' þouȝe attempre wepinge be graunted. certes outrage wepinge is defended. [2181] ¶ Mesure of wepinge shulde be considered aftere þe loor þat' techeþ vs senec' [2182] ¶ Whan þat þi frende is dede seiþ he. lat' not' þine eyen to moist' bene of teeres. commynge to þine eyen. lat' hem nat falle. [2183] And whan þowe hast' forgoon þi freende. Do diligence to geten anoþer. and þis is more wisdome þan forto wepe for þi frende which þat' þow hast' lorne. for þer-in nys no boote. [2184] And þer-fore ȝif ȝe gouerne ȝou by sapience. putte away sorowe from ȝoure hertes. [2185] Remembreþ þat' Ihesus Sirak seiþ.

A man þat is Ioious and glad in hert it conserueþ hym florsshyng in his age But soly sorowful hert makeþ his bonys drie. [2186] He seiþ eke þus. þat sorowe in hert sleeþ ful mony a man. [2187] Salomon seiþ: þat riȝt as mothes in þe shepes fleese annoyen to þe cloþes. and þe smale wormes to þe tree. Riȝt so annoieþ sorowe to þe herte [2188] [1]Wherfore vs auȝt as wel in þe deeþ of oure children as in þe losse of our goodes temporeles haue pacience.

[2189] Remembreþ ȝowe vpon pacient Iob. Whan he had lost his childere and his temporeH substaunce and in his body endured mony a greuous tribulacioñ ȝit saide he þus. [2190] Our lorde haþ [ȝeue it me / our lorde haþ] byraft it me Riȝt so as our lord wolde riȝt so is it done. yblessed be þe name of our lord [2191] ¶ To þise forseide þingges answered Melebius vnto his wif Prudence AH þise wordes quod he bene trewe. and þerto profitable. But trewly myn hert is troubled soo. wiþ þis sorowe. so grisly þat I note what to doon. [2192] Lat calle quod prudence þi trewe frendes alle. and þine lynage whicñ þat bene wise. telleþ ȝour caas and herkeneþ what þei say in counsailinge And ȝou gouerne aftere her sentence. [2193] Salomon seiþ wirk al þi þing by counsail and þou shalt neuere repent

[2194] ¶ Than by þe counsaile of [his wif Prudence] [*Mellibée appella moult de*] folk. [2195] as Sirurgyens. Phisiciens. olde folk and ȝonge. and som of his olde enemyes reconsiled as by her countenaunce to his loue and into his grace. [2196] And þerwiþal þer commen somme of his neiȝboures þat didden him reuerence. more for drede þan for loue as it happeþ oft [2197] ¶ Ther commen also ful mony subtile flaterers and wise aduocates lered in þe lawe.

[2198] And whan þise folk to-gydere were assembled. this Melebius in sorowful wise shewed hem his caas.

[2199] And by þe manere of his speche it semed þat in his hert he bere a cruel yre. redy to do vengeaunce vpon his foon. And sodeynly þan desired þat þe werre shuld bygynne [2200] But naþelees ȝit axed he her counsaile vpon þis matere./ [2201] ¶ A Sirurgien by licence and assent of such as were wise vp aroos and vnto melebius saide as ȝe shul here

[2202] ¶ Sir quod he as to vs Syrurgience appenteþ þat we doo to euery wight þe best þat we can · wher as we bene wiþholden. and to our pacience þat we do no damage. [2203] Wherfore it happeþ mony tyme and oft þat whan þat twey men had euerich wounded oþere oon Sirurgien heleþ hem boþe. [2204] Wherfore vnto our art it is not appertenent to norsshe werre ne parties to supporte / [2205] But certes as to þe warisshing of ȝoure doghtere al be it so þat she perilously be wounded we shullen do so ententif bysynes fro day to nyght That wiþ þe grace of god she shal be hool and sounde as sone as is possible [2206] ¶ Almost riȝt in þe same wise þe Phisicien answerd saue þat þei seiden a fewe woordes moore. [2207] That riȝt as maladies [1]bene by hure contraries saued Riȝt soo shal man warisshe werre by vengeaunce. [2208] His neighbours ful of envie his feyned frendes þat semeden reconsiled his flaterers [2209] made semblant of wepinge and enpeiren and engreggen mochel of þis matere in preising gretely meleby of myȝt. of power. of Richesse *and* of frendes. Dispisinge þe power of his aduersaries / [2210] and seiden vttrely þat he anoon shuld wreke hym. on his foes and bygynne werre.

[2211] ¶ Vp roos þan an aduocate þat was wise. by leue and by counsaile of oþere þat were wise. and saide. [2212] ¶ Lordingges þe nede for þe which we bene assembled in þis place is ful heuy þinge. and a grete matere [2213] by cause of þe wronge and of þe wikkednesse þat haþ bene doon. and eke by resoñ of a grete damage þat

in tyme *com*myng' is possible to fallen. for þe same. [2214] and eke by resoñ of þe grete riches and power' of þe p*ar*ties boþe. [2215] ffor þe whicħ resons it' were a ful grete p*er*ile to erren in þis matere. [2216] Wherfore melebius þis is oure sentence. we counsaile ȝou abouen al þinge. þat riȝt' anoon ȝe do diligence in þe kepinge of ȝoure p*ro*pre p*er*sone in suchħ a wise þat' ȝe ne wante noon espie ne wacche. ȝoure body forto saue. [2217] And after þat' we counsaile þat' in ȝoure hous ȝe sette suffisant' harnays. so þat' þei mowe as wel ȝoure body as ȝ*our* hous defende [2218] But certes forto moue werr*e* . or sodeynly to doo vengeannce we mowe not' deme in so litel tyme þat' were profitable [2219] wherfore we axen leisere and space to haue deliberacioñ in þis caas to deme. [2220] ffor þe Comon prouerbe seiþ þus. He þat' sone demeþ sone shal repent'. [2221] And eke men sayñ þat' þilk Iuge is wis þat' sone vnderstondeþ a matere. and Iuggeþ by leisere. [2222] ffor al be it' soo þat' taryinge be noyful. algate it' is nat' to repreue in ȝeuynge of Iuggement' ne in Vengeaunce takinge whan it' is so suffisaunt' and resonable. [2223] & swed oure lorde Ih*es*u crist' by ensample. ffor whan þe wo*m*man þat' was taken in avoutrie / was brouȝt' in his presence to knowen what' shulde be doon of her p*er*sone. al be it' þat' he wist' wel him self what' he wold answere [*toutesvoies il ne respondi pas*] sodeynly. but he wolde haue deliberacioñ. And in þe grounde he wroot' threse. [2224] and by þise causes we axe deliberacioñ. And we shul þan by grace of good counsaile doo þinge that' shal be profitable

[2225] ¶ Vp sterten þen þe ȝonge folk at onys [1]and þe moost' partie of þat' co*m*panye han scorne of þis wise olde man and bygonnen to make noyse and saide. [2226] Riȝt' soo þe while þat' yren is hoote. men shulde smyte. Riȝt' soo shuld' men wreken her harmes and wrogges.

þe while þei bene fresh*e* and newe. And wiþ lowde voice þei criden werr*e*.

[2227] .Vp roos þoo oon of þise olde wise and wiþ his hondes made counten*aun*ce þat' men shulde holden hem stille and ȝeuen hy*m* audience. [2228] ¶ Lordingges quod he þer is ful mony a man / þat' crien werr*e* werr*e* þat' woten ful litel what' werr*e* amounteþ. [2229] Werr*e* at' his bygynnynge haþ so grete an entre *and* so large þat' euery wiȝt' may entre whan him likeþ and liȝtly fynde werre. [2230] But' certes what' ende shal falle it' is nat' liȝt' to knowe. [2231] ffor soþely whan þat' werre is onys bygonne. þer is ful mony a childe vnborn of his modere. þat' steruen. ȝonge by cause of þilk werr*e* or ellys lye in swowe and dye in wrecchednesse. [2232] And þ*er*fore er þat' eny werr*e* be bygonne: men most' han grete cou*n*saile and grete deliberacioñ [2233] And whan þis olde man had wende to enforsen his tale by resons. wel nygh̄ aH at onys bygonne to rise forto breken his tale. and beden hy*m* ful oft' his wordes forto abrigge. [2234] ffor soþly he þat' precheþ to hem þat' list' nat' here his wordes his sermon availeþ not'. [2235] ffor Ih*esus* Sirak'. seiþ. þat' musike in wepinge is noyous þinge. This is to saien as moch̄ availeþ to speke to-fore folk to which̄ his speche availlèþ not'. as it' is to synge byfore hy*m* þat' wepeþ. [2236] And whan þis wise man segh̄ þat' hym wanted audience al shamefast' he sette hy*m* doune ageyne. [2237] ffor Salomon seiþ. Ther as þou ne maist' not' haue audience. enforce þe nat' to speke [2238] ¶ I se wel q*uo*d þis wise man þat' þe comon prouerbe is soþe. þat' good counsaile whan it' is most' nede availleþ

[2239] ¶ ȝit' had þis Melebius in his counsaile moche folk' þat' prively in his eere counsailed hy*m* moche þinge *and* counsailed hym þe contrarye in general audience

[2240] ¶ Wha*n* Melebius had herd þe grettest'

partye of his counsaile were acorded þat' he shuld make werre. Anoñ consented to her counseillinge and fully affermed her sentence [2241] ¶ Than dame Prudence whan þat' she seye howe þat' her husbonde shope forto wreke hym on his foon and bygynne werre. she in ful vnble wise whan she segh̄ her tyme saide hym þise [1]wordes [2242] ¶ My lord quod she I ȝow biseche as hertely as I dare *and* can no hast' ȝou nat' to fast'. and for aH guerdons as ȝeue me audience. [2243] ffor Pirus Alfons. seiþ þus. who so þat' doþ þe good or harme. hast' þe nat' to qwiten it'. ffor in þis wise þi frende wil abide and þine enemye shal þe lenger lyve in drede./ [2244] ¶ The prouerbe seiþ. He hasteþ wel þat' wisely can abide. And in wicked haast' nys no profit'

[2245] ¶ This Meleby answerd' to his wiff Prudence I. purpoos not' quod he to wirken after' þi counsaile ffor mony causes and resons. ffor certes euery wiȝt' wolde holde me þan a fooH [2246] ¶ This is to sayne If I for þi counsailing' wold chaunge þingges þat' aren affermed by so mony wise men. [2247] Secoundly I saye þat' alle wommen bene wicke. and non good of hem aH. for of a thowsande men saiþ Salomon .I. foond oon good man. But certes of alle wommen good womman fonde I neuer one. [2248] And also certys ȝif I gouerned me by þi counsaille it' shuld seme þat' I had ȝeue þe euere þe maistrie as god forbede þat' it' so were. [2249] ffor Syrak seiþ þat' if þe wif haue þe maistrie she is contrarious [*à son mary*]. [2250] And Salomon seiþ Neuere in þi lif to þi wif ne to þi childe ne to þi frende ne ȝeue no power ouer þi self. ffor bettere it' were þat' þi children asken of þi persone þinge þat' hem nedeþ þan þou sese þi self in þe hondes of þi children [2251] ¶ And also ȝif I wolde wyrk' by þi counsaillinge. Certes my counsaile most' somtyme be secree. til it' were tyme þat' it' most' be

knowe and þis ne may not' be [2252. For it is written, 'þe Ia*n*gelarie of wo*m*men can hide þingges þat' þei woote nouȝt' [2253] Furthermore, the philosopher saith, 'In wicked counsaille wo*m*men venquissh̄ men;' and for these reasons I ought not to make use of thy counsel. (*See l.* 2274, 2280, *p.* 209, 210, *below.*)]

[2254] ¶ Dame Prudence ful debonairly and wiþ grete pacience had harde aH̄ þat' her husbonde liked to say. þan axed she of hym licence forto speke and saide in þis wise. [2255] ¶ My lord q*uo*d she as to ȝoure furst' resoñ certes it' may liȝt'ly be answerde. for I say þat' it' nys no foly to chaunge counsaille whan þe þinge is chaunged. ffor ellis whan þe þinge semeþ oþer wise þan it' was byforn [2256 *Après, je dy encores plus, car se tu avoies promis et juré de faire*] ȝoure emp*r*ise. And naþelees ȝe wayn to [per]foreme þilk' same emp*r*ise. by iust' cause. Men shuld̄ not' seyn þat' ȝe were a lyer or forsworne. [2257] ffor þe booke seiþ The whilo man makeþ no lesinge: whan he turneþ his corage to þe better'. [2258] And al be it' soo þat' ȝoure emp*r*ise be establed and ordeyned by grete multitude of folk. ȝit ther ȝou not' acomplise þilk' same ordynaunce but' ȝou like. [2259] ffor þe trouþe of þingges and þe profite bene raþer founden. in fewe [1] folk' þat' bene wise and ful of resoñ þan by grete multitude of folk' þer euery man crieþ and clatereþ what' hy*m* likeþ. Sooþly such̄ multitude nys not' honest' [2260] And to þe secounde resoñ wher as ȝe seyn þat' wo*m*men bene wicked. saue ȝoure grace Certes ȝe dispise aH̄ wo*m*men in þis wise. and [he] þat' al dispiseth̄ [al displeseth]. as seiþ þe boke. [2261] And Senec' seiþ. Who-so wil haue sapience shal no man dispreise. but' he shal gladly teche þat' he can. wiþ[out] presumpcio*un* or pride. [2262] and suche þinge as he nouȝt' ne can he shal not' bene ashamed to lerne hem / and enquere of lasse

folk' þan hym self. [2263] And þat' þer haþ bene ful mony good wo*m*men. [*l'en le puet prouver légièrement*. [2264] *Premièrement, car nostre Seigneur Ihésu-Crist ne se fust oncques daigné descendre en femme*] ȝif alle wo*m*men had be wikke. [2265] but' for þat' grete bounte þat' is in wo*m*men: our lorde Ih*esus* crist' whan he was risen from deþe to lyf appered raþer to a wo*m*man þan to his apostels. [2266] And þouȝe þat Salomon say. þat' he ne fonde neuer no good wo*m*man: It' foloweþ not' þerfore þat' alle wo*m*men bene wikke. [2267] ffor þouȝe. þat' he ne foonde noon good Certes mony an o*þer*e man haþ founde mony a wo*m*man ful good and trewe. [2268] Or ellis p*er*auenture þe entent' of Salomon þis. as in souereyn bounte he saide no wo*m*man. [2269] This to sayn þat' þer is no wiȝt' þat' haþ souereyne bounte sauf god allone. as he hym self recordeþ in his eu*aun*-gely. [2270] ffor þer nys no creature so good þat' hy*m* ne wanteþ somwhat' of þe p*er*feccio*un* of god þat' is his [maker] [2271] ¶ ȝoure iij. resoñ is þis. ȝe seyne þat' if ȝe gouerned ȝou by counsaile of me it' shulde seme þat' ȝe had ȝeue me þe maistrie *and* þe lordship Ouer ȝoure p*er*soñ. [2272] sir*e* saue ȝoure grace: it' is not' soo. ffor ȝif it' so were þat' man shulde be counsailed but' only of hem þat' had maistrie and lordship ouer his p*er*sone. men wold nat' be counsailled so oft'. [2273] ¶ ffor soþly þilk man þat' axeþ counsaile of a p*ur*poos. ȝit' haþ he free chois wheþer he wil wirk' by þat' counsaile or nōōn. [2274] ¶ And as to ȝoure ferþe resoñ þer as ȝe sayn þat' þe Ia*n*gelarie of wo*m*men can hide þingges þat' þei woote nouȝt' as who seiþ. þat' a wo*m*man can not' hide. [2275] Sir*e* Thise woordes bene vnder-stonde of wo*m*men þat' bene Iangelers and wicked [2276] of which wo*m*me men seiyñ þat' þre þingg*es* dryuen a man out' of his hous. That' is to seyn Smoke. dropping' of Reyn/ and wicked wyues [2277] ¶ And

such̃ wo*m*man seith̃ Salomon . þat' it were better a man were in desert' by hy*m* self . þa*n* wiþ a wo*m*man at' home þat' is riotours . [2278] And Sir*e* by ȝoure leue [1] þat' am nat' I . [2279] ffor ȝe haue ful oft' assaied my grete silence and my grete pacience . and eke how wel I can hiden and hele þing*es* þat' men ouȝten secrely to hyde [2280] ¶ And soþly as to ȝoure .v. resoñ . where as ȝe sayn þat' in wicked counsaille wo*m*men venquissh̃ men / god woote þilk is no reson in no stede . [2281] ffor vnderstondeth̃ nowe . ȝe axen counsaille forto doo wikkednesse . [2282] and if ȝe wiH̃ wirk wickednesse and ȝoure wiff restreyn þilk wikkednesse & ouerco*m*meþ ȝou by reson and by good counsaille / [2283] certis ȝour*e* wiff ouȝt' raþer to be preysed þa*n* yblamed [2284] ¶ Thus shuld ȝe vnderstonde þe philosophre þat' saiþ . In wikked counsaille wo*m*men venquyssh her husbondes [2285] And þer as ȝe blamen all*e* wo*m*men *and* her resons I shal shewe ȝou by mony ensamples þat' mony a wo*m*man haþ bene ful good an ȝit' bene . and her counsaile hoolsom and profitable [2286] Eke som*me* men han saide þat' þe counsail of wo*m*men is eiþer do dere or to litel of price [2287] But' al be it' soo þat' ful mony wo*m*man is badde and her counsaile vile and not' worþe / ȝit' han men founden ful mony a good wo*m*man and ful discrete and wise in counsailynge [2288] ¶ Loo Iacobe by counsaile of his modere Rebekka wan þe benyson of Isaak his fadere *and* þe lordship of al his // [2289] Iudith̃ by her good counsaille delyuered þe Cite of Bethulye in which̃ she dwelled out' of þe hondes of Olyfernes þat' had it' biseched and wolde it' destroye [2290] abigaille deliuered Nabell her husbonde from dauid þe [*roy qui le voloit occire, et appaisa*] þe kinge by her witte and by þe good counsailinge [2291] ¶ Hester By hur*e* good consaile enhaunsed gretly þe puple of god in þe regne of Assuerus . The kinge [2292] and þe same bu*n*te in good counsailynge of

mony a good wo*m*man may men telle / [2293] and moreouer whan our lorde had create Adam our forme fadere he saide in þis wise [2294] ¶ It' is nat' good to be a man allone. make we to hy*m* an helpe s[e]mblable to him self [2295] ¶ Here may ȝe see þat' ȝif wo*m*man were nat' good and her counsaile good and profitable [2296] Oure lord god of heue*n* wolde neiþer haue wrouȝt' hem. ne called hem helpe of man. but' raþer confusion to man. [2297] And þat' seide onys a clerk in twoo vers. What' is bette þan gold. Iasper. And what' is better þan Iaspe. Wisdome. [2298] And what' is bett*er* þan wisdom Wo*m*man. and what' is bett*er* þan good wo*m*man no þinge. [2299] And sir*e* by mony oþer resons may ȝe see þat' wo*m*men bene good [*et leur conseil bon*] and profitable. [2300] And þerfore ȝif ȝe wil trest' to my counsaile I shal restore ȝou ȝoure douȝtere hool [1] and sounde. [2301] And eke I wil do to ȝou so moche þat' ȝe haue honure in þis caas

[2302] ¶ Whan meleby harde þe wordes of his wiff' Prudence he saide þus. [2303] I see wel þat' þe wordes of Salomon bene soþe. He seiþ þat' wordes þat' bene spoken discretely by ordin*au*nce. bene hony combes for þei ȝeuen swet'nesse to þe soule and hoolsomnesse to þe body [2304] And wif by cause of þi swete wordes and eke for I haue assaied and preued þi grete sapience and þi grete trouþe I wil gouerne me by þi counsaile in al þinge

[2305] ¶ Now sir*e* quod dame prudence and siþen ȝe vouche sauf to be gouerned by my counsaile I wol enforme ȝowe howe ȝe shul gouerne ȝoure selfe in chesing' of ȝoure counsaile. [2306] ȝe shal first' in al ȝoure werkes mekely bysechen to þe hiȝe god þat' he wil be ȝoure counseilo*ur* [2307] and shapeþ as to such entent' þat' he ȝeue ȝou counsaile and comforte as tauȝt' Thebye his sone. [2308] At' al tymes þow shalt' blesso

god and prey hy*m* dresse þi waies. and loke alle þi counsailles bene in hy*m* for euermore [2309] ¶ Seint' Iame eke saiþ. If eny of ȝowe haue nede of Sapience. axe it' of god. [2310] and afterward' þan shal ȝe take counsaile in ȝoure self. and examyne wel ȝoure þouȝt*es* of such þingges as ȝou þenkeþ þat' is best' for ȝoure profit'. [2311] And þan shal ȝe driue from ȝoure hert' þoo þat' bene contrarious to good counsayle. [2312] þat' is to sayn Ire. Couetise and hastinesse.

[2313] ffurst' he þat' askeþ counsaile of hy*m* self certys he most' bene wiþ-out' Ire. for many causes [2314] ¶ þe furst' is þis. He þat' haþ grete Ire and wreþe in hy*m* self he weneþ alway þat' he may doo þat' he may nat' doo [2315] ¶ And secoundly he þat' is Irous and wroth̄. he ne may nat' wel deme. [2316] [and he þat] may nat' wel [deme may nat wel] counsaile [2317] ¶ The iij. is this þat' he þat' is Īrous and wroþe as saiþ Senec' ne may nat speke but' blameful þingges / [2318] and wiþ his vicious wordes he stireþ oþer folk' to angre and to Ire. [2319] And eke s*ir* ȝe most dryue Coueitise out' of ȝoure hert'. [2320] ffor þe appostel seiþ þat' Couetise is roote of alle harmes. [2321] And trusteþ wel þat' a couetous man ne can nat' deme [ne thinke] but' only to fulfille þe eende of his couetise [2322] and certes þat' may neuer' ben accompliced. ffor euer more þe habundance þat' he haþ of Ricchesse þe more he desireþ. [2323] ¶ And sir*e* ȝou most' also dryue [1]away from ȝoure hert' hastynesse [2324] for certes ȝe may not' deme for þe best' a sodeyn þouȝt' þat' falleþ in ȝoure hert'. ¶ but' ȝe most' avise ȝou on it' ful oft'. [2325] ffor as ȝe herde he[re]-to-forn þe comon prouerbe. It' is þis þat' he þat' sone demeþ. sone repenteþ.

[2326] Sir*e* ȝe bene not' alway in like disposicion̄ [2327] for certes some þinge þat' semeþ somtyme to ȝou good to do. Anoþ*er* tyme it' semeþ to ȝou þe contrarie

[2328] ¶ Whan ȝe han taken counsaile *in* ȝoure self and so han demed by good delib*er*acioñ such̃ þingg*es* as ȝou semed best' / [2329] þan rede I ȝou þat' ȝe kepe it' Secre [2330] Bywrey nat' ȝoure counsaile to no p*er*sone. but' if so be þat' ȝe wenen þat' sikerly þat' þorgh̃ ȝoure bewreying' ȝoure condicioñ shal be þe more profitable. [2331] ffor Ih*esus* Cirak seiþ. neiþere to þi ffoo ne to þi freende diskeuere not' þi secre ne þi folye [2332] for þei wil ȝeue þe audience and lokinge and supportacioñ in þi presence *and* scorne þe in þine absence [2333] ¶ Anoþer clerk seiþ þat scarcely shalt' þow fynden eny p*er*sone þat' may kepe counsaile secrely. [2334] þe boke saiþ. Whilst' þat' þou kepest' þi counsaile in þine h*er*te þou kepest' it' in þi prisoñ. [2335] And whan þou bywreyest þi co*un*saile to eny wight' he holdeþ þe in his snare [2336] And þerfore it' is better hide þi cou*n*saile in þine hert'. þan preien hy*m* to whoom ȝe han bywreieþ ȝoure counsaile þat' he wil kepe*n* it' clooce and stille [2337] ¶ ffor Senec' saiþ. If so be þat' þou ne may þine owne counsaile hide. how maist þou preien eny oþer wiȝt' þi secree counsaile to kepe [2338] ¶ But' naþelees ȝif þou wene sikerly þat' þi bewriyng' of þi counsaile to a p*er*sone wil make þi condicion stonden in a better plite. þan shalt' þou telle him þi counsaile in þis wise [2339] ¶ ffurst þou shalt' make no semblant' whedere þe were leuer pees or werre. or þis or þat'. ne schewe hym not' þi wille and þine entent'. [2340] ffor trest' wel þat' comonly þise counsailours bene flaterers [2341] and namely þe co*un*seilours of grete lordys. [2342] ffor þei enformen hem alway raþer to speke plesannt' wordys enclynynge to þe lordes lust' þan woordes þat' bene trewe and profitable [2343] ¶ And þerfore men sayne þat' þe riche man haþ seelden good counsaile. but' ȝif he haue it of hym self' [2344] And aftere þat' þow shalt considere þi frendes and þine enemyes. [2345] and as touchinge þi freendes þou shalt con-

sidere ¶ which̃ of hem bene most' feiþfuH. and most wyse *and* eldest' [1]and most' approued in counseillynge / [2346] of hem shalt' þowe axe þi counsaile as þe caas requireþ

[2347] I say not' furst' ȝe shul clepe to ȝoure counsaile ȝoure frendes þat' bene trewe [2348] ¶ ffor Salomon seiþ. þat' riȝt' as þe hert' of a man deliteþ in Sauo*ur* þat' is swete. riȝt' so þe counsaile of trewe frendes ȝeueþ swet'nesse to þe sowle. [2349] He seiþ also þ*a*t þer may no þing' be likned to þe trewe frende. [2350] ffor certes gold ne siluer bene not' so moch̃ worþ as þe good wille of a trewe frende. [2351] ¶ And eke he saiþ þ*a*t' a trewe frende is a grete defence / who so þat' it' fyndeþ. certis he fyndeþ a grete tresoure. [2352] Than shul ȝe eke considere if þat' ȝoure trewe frendes bene discrete and wise. for þe boke seiþ Aske alway þi counsaile of hem þat' bene wise. [2353] And by þis same reson shulde ȝe clepen to ȝoure counsaile of ȝoure frendys þat' bene of age such̃ as han sayn moch̃ and bene expert' in mony þingges and bene approued in counsailinge. [2354] ffor þe boke seiþ þat' in olde men is þe sapience [*et en moult de temps est prudence*] [2355] ¶ And Tullius saiþ þat' greto þingges ne ben not' accomplised by strenght' ne by delyuernesse of body but' by good counsaile By auctorite of p*er*sones and be science þe which̃ iij. þinges ne bene not' feble by age but' certes þei enforsen and encresen day by day. [2356] And þan shal ȝe kepe þis for a general rewle ¶ ffurst' shal ȝe kepe to ȝoure counsaile a fewe of ȝoure frendes þat' especial bene [2357] ffor Salomon seiþ Mony frendes haue þowe but' among a thousand' chese þe oon to be þi counseil-o*ur*. [2358] ffor al be it' soo þat' þowe furst' ne telle þi counsaile but' to a fewe. þou maist' afterward' telle it' to more folk'. ȝif it' be nede. [2359] But' loke alway þat' þi counsailers haue þilk thre condicio*u*ns þat' I haue saide

byfore. þat is to say þat þei bene trewe and wise *and* of olde exp*er*ience. [2360] and wirk not alway in euery nede by oon counsailere allon. for some it byhoueþ be co*un*sailed by mony [2361] ¶ ffor Salomon seiþ [salvation] of þingges: is wher þer bene mony co*un*selours

[2362] ¶ Nowe seeþ what I haue tolde ȝou of which folk ȝe shuld be counsailed. Now wil I telle ȝou which co*un*saile ȝe auȝt eschewe [2363] ¶ ffirst ȝe shul eschewe þe counsaile of foolis. So seiþ Salomon. Take no counsaile of a foole ffor he can no counsaile. but aftere his owne affeccion [2364] ¶ The boke saiþ. þat þe p*ro*prete of a fool is þis. He trowethⁿ liȝtly harme of euery wiȝt. and liȝtly troweþ aⁿ bounte [1]in hym self [2365] Thow eke shal eschewe þe Counsaillynge of aⁿ flaterers suche as enforsen hem raþer to preise þe p*er*sone by flaterye þan forto telle ȝou þe soþfastnesse of þingges./

[2366] ¶ Therfore Tullius seiþ ¶ Amonge alle þe pestilences þat ben in frendship þe grettest is fflatery. And þerfore is moor nede. þ*a*t þowe eschewe and drede and flee from þe swete wordes of flaterers þan of eny oþer puple [2367] ¶ The booke seiþ. Thow shalt raþer drede and fflee from þe swete wordes of flaterers and preisers þan fro þe eger wordes of þi frende þat saiþ þe þi soþes. [2368] ¶ Salomon seiþ: That þe wordes of a flaterer is a snare to cacchen innocentes wiþe. [2369] He seiþ also þat he þat spekeþ to his freende. wordes of swetnesse and of plesaunce setteþ a nett byfore his foote to cacchen him [2370] And þerfore seiþ Tullius ¶ Encline nat þine eeres to fflaterers. ne take no counsaile to wordes of fflatery [2371] And Caton seiþ ¶ Auise þe wel and eschewe wordes of swetnesse and of plesaunce. [2372] And eke þou shalt eschwe þe counsaile of þine olde enemyes [*qui sont reconciliés,* [2373] *car il est escript: nul ne retourne seurement en la*

grâce de son ennemy.] [2374] ¶ And Isope seiþ. Ne trest' not' to hem to þe which þow hast' hadde somtyme werre or enemyte. ne telle not' hem þi counsaile [2375] ¶ And senec' telleþ · þe cause whi · it' may nat' be. He seiþ where þat' grete fuyre haþ longe endured. þat' þer dwelleþ somme vapour of warmnesse [2376] ¶ And þerfore seiþ Salomon./ In þine olde foo trest' neuere. [2377] ffor sikerly þouȝe þine enemye be reconsiled and makeþ þe chere of humilite. and lowteþ to þe his hede. ne trust' him neuere. [2378] for certes he makeþ þilk fayned humilite more for his profite þan for eny loue. of þi persone. [*afin qu'il puisse avoir victoire de toi*] by swich feyned countenaunce. þe which victory he myȝt' not' haue wiþ stryf or werre [2379] ¶ And Peter Alfons seiþ ¶ Make noon felawship wiþ þine olde enemyes. for ȝif þowe doo hem bounte. þei wil peruerten it' into wykkednesse [2380] ¶ And eke þou most' eschwe þe counsaile of ham þat' beñ þi se[r]uauntes. and beren þe grete reuerence. for perauenture þei sayñ it' more for drede þan for loue [2381] ¶ And þerfore seiþ a Philosophre in þis wise: Ther nys no wiȝt' perfitly trwe to hym þat' he to fore dredeþ [2382] ¶ And Tullius saiþ ¶ Ther is noo myȝt' so grete of noon Emperour that' longe may endure but' ȝif he haue more loue of þe puple þan drede [2383] ¶ Thow shalt' also e[s]cheu þe counsaillynge of folk þat' bene dronklewe. for þei ne can no counsaile hide [2384] ¶ ffor Salomon seiþ ¶ Ther is no counsaile þer as regneþ dronknesse [2385] ¶ ȝe shul also haue in suspecte þe counsaile of such folk' as counsaile ȝowe prively. oon. [1]and þe contrarie openly [2386] **ffor Cassiodorie seiþ**./ That' it' is a manere scleiȝt' to hindere. whan he sweweth to doon oon þinge openly and werkeþ þe contrarie prively [2387] ¶ Thow shalt' also haue in suspecte the counsailing' wiþ wickeþ folke **ffor þe boke saiþ** The counsailynge of wicked folk' is alway ful

of fraude [2388] **And d*auid* seiþ** Blessed is þat' man þat' haþ not' folowed þe counsailling' of wikked men or schrewen [2389] ¶ Thow shalt' also eschewe þe counsaile of ȝonge folk'. for her counsaile is not' ripe

[2390] ¶ Now Sir*e* siþ I haue shewde ȝou of such folk' ȝe shuld take ȝoure counsaille And of which folk' ȝe shul take ȝoure counsaile. and of which folk' ȝe shul folowe þe counsaille [2391] ¶ Now shal I telle ȝou howe ȝe shul examyne ȝoure counsaile. after' þe doct*r*ine of Tullius [2392] in examynynge. þan of ȝoure counseillo*ur*. ȝe shul considere mony þingges [2393] ¶ Alþer furst' ȝe shul considere þat' in þilk þinge þat' þowe p*ur*posest. *and* vppon what' þinge þow wolt' haue counsaille þat' verrey trouþe be saide and considered. This is to sayn telle trewly þi tale. [2394] for he þat' seiþ fals may not' wel be counsailed in þat' tale [in which he lyeth] [2395] And after' This þou shalt' considere þoo þingges þat' accorden to þat' þou p*ur*posest forto doo by þi counsaillours. ȝif reson. accorde þerto. [2396] & eke ȝif þi myght' may atteyne þerto. And ȝif þe more party and þe better part' of þi counsailours accorde þerto anoon. [2397] þan shalt' þou considere þat' þinge þat' shal folowe of þat' counsailleng'. as. pees. werre. grace. profite or damage and mony oþer þingges. [2398] [*et en toutes ces choses*] þow shalt' chese þe best' and wayue alle oþer. [2399] ¶ Than shalt' þow considere of what' roote is engendred þi matere of þi counsaile and whatt' fruyte may be conseyued and engendred þer-of [2400] ¶ Thow shalt' also considere alle þise cases from whannes þei bene sprongen [2401] And whan ȝe han examyned ȝoure counsaille as I haue saide. which parte is þe better *and* more profitable and haue approued it' by mony wise folk' and eelde. [2402] Than shalt' þow considere if þow maist' p*er*forme it' and make of it' a good ende. [2403] ffor resoñ wil not' þat' eny man shuld bygynne a þinge but' ȝif he myght' p*er*forme it' as hym lest or auȝt' [2404] Ne no wiȝt' shuld

take vpon him so heuy a charge þat' he myȝt' not' bere it'. [2405] ffor þe prouerbe seiþ. He þat' to moche embraiseth: destrayneþ litel · [2406] And Caton saiþ ¶ Assaie to doo such þingges as þow hast pouer to doo. lest' þat' þi charge oppresse þe so soor þat' þe byhoueþ to wayue. þinge þat' þou hast' bygonne [2407] ¶ And ȝif so be [1] þat' þowe be in doute whedere þou maist' *per*forme a þinge or noon. chese raþer to suffre þan bygynne [2408] **And Petrus Alfons** / saiþ: If þou hast' myght' to done a þinge of which þe most' repent'. it' is bettere nay þan ȝee. [2409] This is to sayn þat' þe is bettere to holde þi tunge stille. þan forto speke. [2410] Than may ȝe vnderstonde by strenger resons. þat' ȝif þou hast' powere to *per*fourme a warke of which þou shalt' repent'. þan is it' bett*er* þat' þowe suffre þan bygynne [2411] ¶ Wel sayne þei þat' defenden euery wiȝt' to assay a þing' of which he is in doute whedere he may *per*forme it' or noon. [2412] And after whan ȝe han examyned ȝoure counsaile as I haue saide biforn. and knowen wel ȝe may *per*fo*ur*me ȝoure emprise. conforme it' þan sadly til it' be at' an cend

[2413] ¶ Nowe is it' reson and tyme. þat' I shewe when and wherfore þat' ȝe may chaunge ȝoure counsaillo*ur*s wiþ-out' repreef' [2414] ¶ Soþely a man may change his counsaille. and his p*ur*poos if þe cause seseþ. or whan a newe cause byndeþ. [2415] ffor þe lawe seiþ þat' vpon þingges þat' newly betiden byhoueþ newe *con*saille. [2416] **And Senec' seiþ** / ȝif þi counsaile be co*m*men to þe eeres of myñ enemye: chaunge þi counsaille [2417] ¶ Thow maist' also chau*n*ge þi counsaille. ȝif so be þat' þou fynde þat' by erro*ur* or by oþ*er* cause harme or damage may be-tide [2418] ¶ Also ȝif þi counsaille be dishonest. or ellis co*m*meþ of dishonest' cause chaunge þi *con*saille [2419] **ffor þe lawes sayn** · þat' al byheestes þat' bene dishonest' bene of no valewe.

[2420] And eke ȝif it so be þat it be inpossible or may not goodly be performed or kept.

[2421] And take þis for a general rewle þat euery counsaile þat is affermed so strongly þat it may nat be chaunged for no condicioñ þat may be-tide I saye þat þilk counsayle is wikked

[2422] ¶ This Melebius wha*n* he had herde þis doct*rine* of his wiff Dame Prudence. Answerde in þis wise. [2423] ¶ Dame quod he as ȝit into þis tyme ȝe han wel and co*n*nably tauȝt me. as in generaH howe I shal gouerne as in chesinge and in wiþholding of my counsaillours [2424] But nowe wolde I fayn þat ȝe wolden condescenden in especiaH. [2425] and tel me howe likeþ. or what semeþ ȝowe by our counsaillours þat we haue chosen in our present nede

[2426] ¶ My lord quod she I biseche ȝowe in alle humblesse þat ȝe wil not wilfully replie aȝeinst my resons / and mystemper nat ȝour hert þouȝe I [1] say or speke þinge þat ȝou displeseþ. [2427] ffor god woote þat as þat as in myn entent I speke it for ȝoure best for ȝoure honure and ȝoure profite. [2428] and soþly. I hope þat ȝoure benignite wil taken in pacience. [2429] Tresteþ me wel quod she þan þat ȝoure counsaille as in þis caas ne shuld nat as forto speke p*ro*prely. be called a consaillinge. but a mociōn or mouynge of foly. [2430] in which counsaille ȝe han erred [*en moult de manières*]

[2431] [*Premièrement, tu as erré*] in þe assemblyng of ȝoure counsaillers. [2432] ffor ȝe shuld first haue cleped a fewe folk [*et puis après plusieurs*] ȝif it had bene nede. [2433] But certes ȝe han sodeynly cleped to ȝoure counsaille a grete multitude of puple. fful chargeant and ful noyous forto here [2434] Also ȝe han erred. for þere as ȝe shuld oonly haue cleped to ȝoure counsaille ȝoure trewe freendes olde and wise [2435] ȝe haue ycleped straunge folk. ȝonge folk. fals flat*er*ers and enemyes

reconsiled and folk' þat' done ȝou reuerence w*ith*out' loue [2436] ¶ Also ȝe haue erred. for ȝe haue brouȝt' wiþ ȝou to ȝoure counsaille. Ire. Coueityse. and hastynesse [2437] þe which̃ þre þingges [*sont contraires à conseil, et*] [2438] ȝe han not' avyncesed or destroyed he*m* / neiþ*er* in ȝoure self ne in ȝoure counsaillours as ȝe ouȝt [2439] ¶ ȝe haue erred also for ȝe han shewed to ȝoure counsailers ȝoure talent' *and* ȝoure affection to make werre anoon and forto do vengeance. [2440] þei han espied by ȝoure wordes to what' þing' ȝe bene enclined. [2441] & þerfore han þei counsailled ȝou raþer to ȝoure talent' þan to ȝoure p*r*ophete [2442] ¶ ȝe haue erred also. ffor it semed þat' ȝou suffised to haue bene counsailled by þise counsailloures oonly & w*ith* þat' litel avice./ [2443] Where as in so grete and so highe a nede it' had ben necessarie moo counsaillours and more delib*er*acioñ to p*er*forme ȝoure emprise [2444] ¶ ȝe haue erred also. for ȝe haue nat' examened ȝour*e* counsaile in þe forseide matere ne in dwe manere. as þe cace requireþ [2445] ¶ ȝe han erred also for ȝe han maked no dyuysioñ bytwix ȝoure counsaillours. þis is to sayñ bytwix ȝoure frendes & ȝoure fayned cou*n*saillours [2446] ne ȝe han not' knowe þe wille of ȝoure trewe frendes. olde and wise [2447] But' ȝe han cast' alle her wordes in an hoc̃hepote and enclyned ȝoure herte to þe more p*ar*te and to þe gretter nombre and þer by ȝe condescended. [2448] And siþ ȝe wote wele þat' men shal fynde a gretter multitude of fooles þa*n* of wise men. [2449] and þerfor þe counsaillours þat' ben at congregacions and multitudes of folk' þer as men take more reward' to þe nombre þan to þe sapience of p*er*sones [2450] ¶ ȝe se wel þat' [1]in such̃ counsaillyngg*es* fooles haue þe maistrie [2451] .Melebius answerd' ageyn and saide ¶ I graunte wel þat' I haue erred. [2452] but' þer as þowe saist' me here bifore þat' he nys nat' to blame þat' chau*n*geþ his coun-

saillours in certeyn cases and for certeyn iust' causes [2453] I am al redy to chaunge my counsailours riȝt' as þowe wolt' devise [2454] ¶ The prouerbe seiþ. þat' forto do synne is ma*n*nyssh̄ But certes forto p*er*seuere longe in synne is werke of' þe deueł

[2455] ¶ To þis sentence anoon answered dame prudence and saide [2456] Examyneþ quod þan she ȝoure counsaile. and lat vs see whiche of hem haþ spoken moost' resonable & taught' ȝou best' counsaile. [2457] And for as moche as þat' þe examynacioñ is necessarie lat' vs bygynne at' Cirurgiens and at' þe phisicience þat' furst' speken in þis matere. [2458] I say ȝou þat' þe Cirurgiens *and* þe phisiciens haue seiden ȝou in ȝoure counsaile discretly as hem auȝte. [2459] and in her speche seiden ful wisely as to þe office þat' hem appenteþ to done to euery wight' honoure and profite and no wiȝt' to anoye [2460] and aftere her craft' to doon grete diligence vnto þe cure of hem which̄ þat' þei han in gou*ern-aun*ce. [2461] And sir' riȝt' as þei han answered wisely and discretely [2462] riȝt so rede I þat' þei bene heghly and souereynly guerdoned for her noble speche. [2463] and eke for þei shuld do þe more ententif bysynes in þe Curacioñ of ȝoure douȝter' / [2464] ffor al be it' soo þat' þei bene ȝoure freendes þerfore shal ȝe not' suffre þat' þei serue ȝou for nouȝt' [2465] But' ȝe auȝt' þe raþer to gerdone he*m* and shewe hem ȝour largesse. [2466] And as tochinge þe p*ro*posicioñ þe which̄ þe phisiciens encresden in þis caas. þis is to sayn [2467] þat' in maladies. þat' oon contrarieþ is warshed by anoþer contrarie [2468] .I wold fayn knowe how þei vnderstonde þilk' text' And what' is her sentence [2469] ¶ Certes q*uo*d Melebius vnderstonden it' in þis wise. [2470] þat' riȝt' as þei han [*m'(ont) fait un contraire, que je leur face un autre,* [2471] *et pour ce qu'ils (se) sont*] venged h*a*m on me and done me wronge Riȝt' so shal I venge me vpon hem.

and done hem wronge [2472] and þan haue I cured oon contrary by a noþer

[2473] ¶ lo lo quod dame Prudence. how liȝtly is euery man enclyned to his owne desire and to his awne plesaunce [2474] Certes q*uo*d she. wordes of þe phisiciens ne shulden nat' haue bene vnderstonden in þis wise. [2475] ffor certys wikkednesse is nat' co*n*trarie to wicknesse. ne vengeance to vengeaunce. ne wrong' to wronge. but' þei bene semblable [2476] and þerfor on vengea*u*nce is not' warisshed by anoþ*er* vengeaunce. ne oon wrong' by a noþ*er* [1]wronge. [2477] but' euer-yc̄ of hem encreseþ and angreþ and greggeþ oþer. [2478] But certes þe wordes of þe phisicieñ shuld ben vnderstonden in þis wise. [2479] ffor goodnesse and wikkednesse ben two cont*ra*ries and pees and werre *and* vengeau*n*ce and suffrance. discord' and accorde and mony oþer þingges. [2480] But' certes wikkednesse shal be warsshed by goodnesse. discord' by accord'. werre by pees. *and* so forþ of oþer þingges. [2481] And also to hem accordeþ [*saint Pol*] þe appostel in mony places [2482] He seiþ. ne ȝeldeþ nouȝt' harme for harme ne wikked speche for wikked speche. [2483] but' doþ wel to hem þat' don ȝou harme. and blesse hem þat' sayn to þe harme [2484] *and* in mony oþer places he amonesteþ pees and accorde. [2485] ¶ But' now wil I speke to ȝou of þe counsaile which̄ þat' was ȝeuen to ȝou by þe men of lawe and þe wise folk' [2486] þat' seiden al̄ by oon acorde as ȝe han herd' bifore. [2487] That' ouer alle þingges ȝe shal do ȝoure diligence to kepe ȝoure p*er*sones and to warnestore ȝoure hous [2488] and saiden also. þat' in þis ȝe ouȝt' forto worchen ful wisely and bisily and wiþ grete delib*er*acioñ [2489] And sir*e* as to þe furst' poynt' þat' toucheþ to þe keping' of ȝour p*er*sone [2490] ȝe shul vnderstonde þat' he þat' haþ werre shal euermore deuoutely and mekely preien by-forn alle þingges [2491] þat' Ihe*s*u c*ri*st of his mercy. wol

haue hy*m* in his protectiõ and bene his souereyn helpinge at' his nede. [2492] ffor certes in þis world' þer nys no wiȝt' þat' may be counsailled or kepte sufficiently wiþ-out' þe kepinge of our lord' Ihesu c*r*ist. [2493] To þis sentence accordeþ þe profete Dauid þat' seiþ. [2494] ȝif god ne kepe þe Citee in ydel waiteþ he þat' it' kepeþ. [2495] Now sir*e* þan shul ȝe co*m*mitte [*la garde*] of ȝoure p*er*sone to ȝoure trewe frendes þat' bene appreued and yknowe [2496] and of hem shul ȝe asken helpe ȝoure body forto kepe ffor eaton seiþ ¶ ȝif þou hast' nede of helpe aske it' of þi frendes [2497] ffor þer is noon so good a phisicien as þi trewe frende [2498] ¶ Aft*er* þis þan shal ȝe kepe ȝou from al straunge folk' and fro leers *and* haue alway in suspecte her companye [2499] ¶ ffor Pers Alfons seiþ *þus* ne take no company by þe waye of a straunge mon. but ȝif so be þat' þowe knowe him of a lenger tyme. [2500] And ȝif so be þat' he falle to þi companye p*er*-auenture wiþ-outen þine assent' [2501] enquere þan as sotilly as euer þou maist' of his conuersaciõ and of his lyf byfore and feyne þi way. Say þow wolt' goo þidere as þou wilt' not' goo. [2502] and ȝif he bere a spere holde þe on þe riȝt' side. And ȝif he bere [1]a swerde holde þe on þe lift' side [2503] and so after' þis þan shal ȝe kepe ȝou wisely from al such manere puple as I haue saide byfore and hem and her counsaile eschewe. [2504] And þan after þat' shal ȝe kepe ȝou in such a manere [2505] þat' for eny presumpciõ of ȝoure strength. þat' ȝe ne despise nat' þe myȝt' of ȝoure enemye and of ȝ*our* aduersarie. so lite þat' ȝe lete þe kepinge of ȝoure p*er*sone for ȝoure presumpciõn. [2506] ffor euery wise man dredeþ his enemye. [2507] Salomo*n* saiþ. wakeful is he þat' oft' haþ drede. [2508] ffor certes he þat' þorowe hardynesse of his hert' and þorowe þe hardynesse of hy*m* self' haþ to grete presumpciõn him shal euel betide [2509] ¶ Than

shal ȝe euermore countrewaite enbusshmentys and al especials. [2510] ffor Senec' saiþ. þat' þe wise man þat' dredeþ harmes: escheweþ harmes. [2511] he ne falleþ not' into *per*iles: þat' *per*iles escheweþ [2512] ¶ And al be it' so þat' it' seme þat' þou art' in siker place ȝit' shaltowe alway doo þi diligence in kepinge of þi *per*sone. [2513] þis is to sayn be not' neeligent' to kepe þi *per*sone not' oonly from þi grettest' enemyes: but' fro þi leest' enemyes. [2514] Senec' saiþ. A man þat' is wel avised he dredeþ his leest' enemye [2515] Ovide. saiþ. þat' þe litel wesch wil slee þe grete Owle and þe wilde hert' [2516] And þe boke seiþ: A litel þorne may prik' a kinge ful sore. And an hounde wil holde þe wilde bore. [2517] But' naþelees I say. ¶ not' þou shalt' be so moch cowarde þat' þou doute þer as it' is no drede [2518] ¶ The boke saiþ / þat' some folk' han grete lest' to desceyue. but' ȝit' þei dreden hem to be desceyued. [2519] ȝit' shalt' þou drede to be empoysened and kepe þe from þe company of scorners [2520] ¶ ffor þe booke seþ: Wiþ scorners make no companye. but' flee hem and her wordes as venyme.

[2521] Now as to þe secounde poynt' when as ȝoure wise counsailours counsailed ȝow to war*n*store ȝoure hous wiþ grete diligence. [2522] I wold fayn knowe how þat' ȝe vnderstonden þilk' wordys and what' is ȝoure Sentence.

[2523] Melebius Answerd and saide. Certes I vnderstonde it' in þis wise þat' I shal warnstore myn hous wiþ towres such as haue castels and oþer manere edifi[c]es and armure and arcelries [2524] by such þingges as I may my *per*sone and my hous kepe and defende. þat' myn enemyes shul be in drede myn hous to approche.

[2525] To þis sentence anon answerd Dame Prudence ¶ Warnstoringe quod she of hegh toures and grete edifices [appertaineth sometimes to pride [2526] Men make towers and great edifices] with grete

costages and wiþ grete travaile. and whan þat þei be accompliced. ȝit bene þei nat worþ a stree. but ȝif þei ben deffended by trewe frendes þat bene olde and wise./ [2527] [1]And vnderstonde wel þat þe strengest and þe grettest garisoñ þat þe riche man may haue as wel to kepe his p*er*sone as his goodes. is [2528] þat he be beloued wiþ his subiectys. and wiþ his neiȝbo*urs* [2529] ffor þus saiþ Tullius ¶ That þer is a maner garnesoñ þat no man may venquyssh̃ ne discomfett. And þat is [2530] a lord to be byloued wiþ his Citeseins and of his puple

[2531] Now sir as to þe iij. poynt where as ȝoure olde and wise couñsaillours. seiden þat ȝowe ne auȝt not sodeynly ne hastely proceden in þis nede. [2532] but þat ȝou auȝt purveien and apparailen ȝou in þis caas wiþ grete diligence *and* grete deliberacioñ. [2533] trewly I trowe þat þei seiden riȝt wisely and riȝt soþe. [2534] ffor Tullius seiþ ¶ In euery nede er þow bygynne it apparaille þe wiþ grete diligence [2535] Than say I þat in vengeance takinge in werre in bataile and in warne-storinge. [2536] er þan þou bygynne. I rede þat þou apparaile þe þerto. and do it with̃ grete deliberacioñ. [2537] ffor Tullius saiþ: ¶ That longe apparaylinge to-forn þe bataile: makeþ shorte victorie. [2538] And so Cassidor*us* saiþ. ¶ The garneson is strenger whan it is longe tyme avised.

[2539] But now lat vs speke more of þe counsaile. þat was accorded by ȝoure neighbours which̃ as doon ȝou reuerence wiþ-out loue [2540] ȝoure olde enemyes reconsiled, ȝoure flaterers [2541] þat co*u*nsailden ȝou certeyn þingges prively. and openly counsailden ȝou þe contrarie [2542] ¶ The ȝonge folk also þat counsailed ȝou to venge ȝou / and make werre anoon̄ [2543] ¶ And certes sire as I haue saide byforn̄ ȝe haue gretly erred to han cleped Such̃ manere folk to ȝoure counsaile. [2544] which̃ counsailours bene nowe repreued. by þe resons to-fore saide. [2545] But naþelees lat nowe descende to

þe speciall. ¶ ȝe shullen furst' proceden aftere þe doctrine of Tullius [2546] ¶ Certes þe trouþe of þis or þis counsaile nedeþ nat' diligently enquere. [2547] for it' is wel wist' which þei bene þat' done to ȝou þis trespace and vilanye [2548] and how mony trespasours. and in what' manere þei han to ȝou done. All þis wronge and al þis vylanye [2549] And aftere þis þan shal ȝe examyne þe .ij. condicions whiche þat' þe same Tullius addeþ in þis matere. [2550] ffor Tullius put' to a þinge. þe which he clepeþ consentinge. þis is to sayn [2551] ¶ Who ben þei and which bene þei. and how mony. þat' consenten to þi counsaile in þi wilfulnesse to doo hastely ¶ vengeaunce. [2552] And lat' vs considere also. Who bene þei and howe mony & which bene þei þat' consenten to ȝoure aduersaries. [2553] And certys as to þe [1]furst' poynt' it' is wel knowen which folk' bene þei þat' consenten to ȝoure hastif wilfulnes. [2554] ffor trewly al þoo þat' counsailden ȝou to make sodeyn werre ne bene nat' ȝoure frendes [2555] [*Or véons doncques qui tu es et qui sont ceulx que tu tiens tant à ennemis.*] as to ȝoure persone. [2556] ffor al be it' soo þat' ȝe bene myghty and riche. certes ȝe bene but' alloon. [2557] for certes ȝe ne haue no childe but' a douȝtere. [2558] ne ȝe ne haue no breþeren ne Cosyns Germaynns ne noon oþer nygh kynrede./ [2559] wherfore þat' ȝoure enemyes for drede shulden stent' to plede with ȝowe ne destroye ȝoure persone [2560] ¶ ȝe knowe also þat' ȝoure richesses mosten be dalt' in diuers parties. [2561] and whan þat' euery wiȝt' haþ his parte þei ne wol not' take but' litel reward to venge þi deth. [2562] but' þine enemyes bene þre. And þei han mony children. breþeren Cosynes and oþer nygh kinrede. [2563] And þouȝe it' so were þow haddest' sclayn of hem twoo or þree. ȝit' dwellen þer ynowe to wreke her deeth. and to slee þi persone [2564] And þouȝe so were þat' ȝoure kynrede were more siker and stedfast' þan

þe kyn of ȝoure aduersaries. [2565] ȝit' naþelees ȝoure kynrede nys but' litel kynrede. and litel sibbe to ȝowe. [2566] And þe kynne of ȝoure enemyes ben nygh̄ sibbe to hem. And certis as to þat'. Her condicione is bett' þat' ȝowres. [2567] Than lat' vs considere also. ȝif þe counsaillinge of hem þat' counsailed ȝowe to take sodeyn vengeaunce whedere it' accorde to resoñ. [2568] Certys ȝe knowe wel nay. [2569] ffor as by riȝt' and resoñ þer may no man take vengeaunce on no wiȝt' but' þe Iuge þat' haþ þe Iurisdictioñ of it' [2570] whan it' is ygraunted hym to take þilk' vengeance hastely or attemperally as þe lawe requireþ. [2571] And ȝit' moreouere of þilk' word' þat' Tullius clepeþ consentynge. [2572] Thow shalt' considere ȝit' þow myȝt' and þi power myȝt' consent' and suffice to þi wilfulnesse and to þi counsailours. [2573] ¶ And certes þou maist' wel say nay. [2574] for sikerly as forto speke proprely. we may do no þinge. but' oonly þing' as we may done riȝtfully. [2575] And certes riȝt'fully ne mowe ȝe take no vengeaunce as of ȝoure propre auctorite [2576] þan mowe ȝe sene þat' ȝoure power consenteþ nat' ne accordeþ not' to ȝoure wilfulnesse [2577] ¶ lat' vs nowe examyne þe iij poynt' þat' Tullius clepeþ consequent' [2578] [*Tu dois doncques savoir que à vengence que tu veulx faire, est conséquent*] [2579] And þerof foloweþ a-noþer vengeaunce perile and werre. and oþer damages wiþ-out' nombre of which̄ we bene litel warre as at þis tyme./ [2580] ¶ And as touþing' þe fourte poynt' þat' Tullius clepeþ engendringe [2581] þou shalt' considere þis wronge which̄ þat is done to þe is engendred of þe hate of þine enemyes [2582] and of þe [1]vengeance takinge vpon þat' wolde engendre anoþere vengeaunce And mochel sorowe and waastinge of Richesse as I saide eerst'.

[2583] ¶ Now sire as þan touchinge to þe poynt'. That' Tullius causes which̄ þat' is þe last' poynte [2584] þou

shalt' vnderstonde þat' þe wronge þat' þou hast' receyued haþ certeyne causes. [2585] whiche þat' clerkes clepen orience. And officience. And causa longinqua and causa propinqua. This is say þe fer cause and þe nyȝe cause. [2586] The fer cause is almyȝty god þat' is cause of al þingges. [2587] The nere cause is by þre enemyes [2588] ¶ The cause accidentale was hate. [2589] þe cause materiall beþ .v. woundes of þi douȝtere [2590] The cause formal is þe maner of her worching' þat' brouȝten ladders and clomben Inne at' þi wyndowes. [2591] The cause ffynal was. for to sele þi doughtere. It' letted nouȝt' in as moch̃ as in hem was / [2592] Than to speke of þe ferþe cause as to what' ende þei shal come or what' shal fynaly bytide of hem in þis caas. ne can I not' deme but' by countyng' and by supposinge [2593] ¶ ffor we shul suppose. þat' þei shul come to a wikked ende. [2594] by cause *þat'* þe booke of Decrees seiþ ¶ Seeldome or wiþ grete peyne bene causes ybrouȝt' to good ende whan þei bene bodely begonne.

[2595] ¶ Now sire ȝif men wold aske me whi þat' ȝe suffred men to doo ȝou þis wronge and vilenye. Certes I can nat' wel answere as for no soþfastnesse. [2596] ffor þe apostell saiþ. þat' þe sciences and þe Iugementes of our lord god almyȝty. bene ful depe. [2597] þer may no man conprehende ne Serchen hem suffisantly [2598] ¶ Naþelees by certeyne presu*m*pcioñs of coniectynggs I holde and bileue [2599] þat' god which̃ þat' is ful of iustice. and of riȝtwisnesse haþ suffred þis bitidde by Iustise ¶ cause resonable

[2600] ¶ Thi name is Melebye ¶ This is to sayne a man þat' drynkeþ hony. [2601] thow hast' ydronke so moche hony of which̃ swete temporell richesses / and delicious honoures of þis world [2602] þat' þou art' dronken. and hast' forȝeten Ihesu crist' þine creature [2603] Thow ne hast' not' doon to hym such̃ honoure and reuerence as þe auȝt' [2604] ne þou ne hast' nat' wel taken kepe to

þe wordes of O ¶ Ovide þat' seiþ. [2605] Vndere þe hony of þe goddes of þi body. is hidde þe venyme þat' sleeþ þi soule [2606] ¶ And Salomon saiþ. ȝif þou hast' found' hony. eete of it' þat' suffiseþ the. [2607] ffor ȝif þou ete of it' out' of mesure. þou shalt' spewe and be nedy and poore. [2608] and *per*auenture criste haue þe in despite. and haþ turned away from þe his face and his eeres of mysericord' [2609] And also he haþ suffred *þat* þou hast be [1]punshed in þe manere þat' þou hast' trespased. [2610] Thou hast' doon synne aȝeinst' our lord crist' [2611] ffor certes iij. enemyes of mankynde þat' is to seyne þe flessh̄. þe feende. and þe worlde [2612] thowe hast' suffred hem entred into þine hous wilfully by þe wyndowe of þi body. [2613] And hast' nat' defended þi self sufficiently aȝeinst' her assawtes and her te*m*ptacions so þat' þei han wounded þe saule in .v. places. [2614] þis is to sayn þe dedly synnes þat' bene entred into þine hert' by þi .v. wyndowes [2615] and in þe same manere our lord *cri*st haþ suffred and willed þat' þise iij. enemyes bene entred into þi hous by þi wyndowes [2616] and haue ywounded þi douȝtere in þe forsaide manre

[2617] ¶ Certes q*uo*d Melebius I se wel þat' ȝe enforce ȝou moche by wordis to ouercome me in suche a manere þat' I shal not' venge me on myn enemyes. [2618] shewing' me þe periles *and* þe eueles þat' myghten falle of þis vengeaunce [2619] But' who so wold' considere in alle vengeances þe periles and euels þat' myȝten swe of vengeance takinge [2620] a mon wold neuere take vengeance and þat' were harme [2621] ffor by þe vengeaunce takinge. bene þe wikked men disseuered fro*m* þe good men. [2622] And þei þat' han wille to do wikkednesse restreynen her wikked p*ur*poos whan they sene þe punshynge and chastising' of trespasoures.

[2623] [And to this answered dame Prudence: 'Certes,' said she, 'I grant you that from vengeance come many

advantages as well as many evils; [2624] yet vengeance belongeth not to a "senglere persone," but only to the judges, and to those who have jurisdiction over evil-doers.'] [2625] And ȝit' say I more þat' as riȝt' as so senglere persone synneþ in takinge vengeaunce of a noþer man [2626] Riȝt' so synneþ þe Iuge ȝif he dco no vengeaunce on hem þat' it' haue deserued [2627] ¶ ffor Senec' seiþ þus ¶ þat' maister he saiþ is good þat' repreueþ shrewes [2628] ¶ And as Cassiodorie seiþ. A man dredeþ to do outrage whan he woote and knoweþ þat' it displeseþ to þe Iugges and þe souereyns. [2629] And anoþer seiþ ¶ The Iuge þat' dredeþ to do riȝt'. makeþ men schrewes [2630] ¶ And seint' Paule þe appostel seiþ in his epistel whan he writeþ to þe Romayns þat' þe Iuge berent' not' þe spere wiþ-outen cause. [2631] but' þei beren it' to punshe þe schrewes and mysdoers and forto defende þe good men. [2632] ȝif ȝe wil þan take vengeance of ȝoure enemyes ȝe shal retourne or haue ȝoure recours to þe Iuge þat' haþ þe Iurisdictiõ vpon him [2633] and he shal punsshe hem as þe lawe askeþ and requereþ

[2634] ¶ A quod Melebies þis vengeance likeþ me no þinge [2635] I by-þenk me nowe and take hede. howe fortune haþ norsshed me fro my childhode. and haþ hulpen me to passe mony a stronge paas [2636] ¶ Now wil I assaien her trowinge wiþ goddes helpe þat' he shal helpe me my shame forto [1] venge

[2637] ¶ Certes quod Prudence ȝif ȝe wil wirk' by my counsail ȝe shul not' assaien fortune by no way [2638] ne ȝe shul not' lene ne bowe vnto hire. after þe wordes of Senec'. [2639] ffor þingges þat' bene folily done. and þat' bene in hope of fortune shullen neuere come to good eende. [2640] ¶ And as þe same senc' saiþ. þe more clere and þe more shynynge þat' fortune is. þe more brotel and þe sonner brekeþ she. [2641] tresteþ not' on her for she nys nat' stedfast'. [2642] ffor whan þowe wenest' or trowest' to be more swre or siker of her

helpe. she wil faile þee. [2643] ¶ And *þer* as ȝe sayn þat' fortune haþ norsshed ȝou from ȝoure childhode. [2644] I say þat' in so mochel shal ȝe þe lasse trest' in her'. and in her witt' [2645] ¶ ffor Senec' saiþ. what' man þat' is norsshed by fortune? she makeþ him to grete a foole [2646] ¶ Now þan siþ ȝe desire and aske vengeau*n*ce. and þe vengeance þat' is done [*selon l'ordre de droit et devant le juge ne te plaist,* [2647] *et la vengence qui se fait*] in hope of fortune is p*er*ilous and vncerteyn. [2648] þen haue noon oþer remedy. but' forto haue ȝoure cours vnto þe souereyn Iuge þan vengeþ alle vilanyes and wrongges. [2649] and he shal venge ȝou. After hy*m* self witnesseþ? where as he saiþ [2650] ¶ leueþ þe vengeance to me./ & I shal doo it'

[2651] ¶ Melebius answered. ȝif I ne venge me noȝt' of þe vilanye þat' men han done to me. [2652] I shal somne or warne hem þat' han do to me þoo vilanyes and al oþer to doo me anoþer vilanye. [2653] ¶ ffor it' is writen. ȝif þou take no vengea*u*nce of an olde vilanye / þow somnest' þine adu*er*saries to doo an newe vilanye. [2654] And also for my suffraunce men wolden doo me so moche vilanye þat' I myȝt' neiþer bere it' ne susteyne it'. [2655] And so þan I shulde be kept' ouer lawe [2656] ¶ ffor men sayn In mochel suffringe shul mony þingges vnto þe which þow shalt' not' mow suffre

[2657] ¶ Certes quod prudence I g*ra*unte ȝow þat' ouer mochel suffraunce is not' good [2658] But' ȝit' ne foloweþ it' not' þer-of. That' euery p*er*sone to whome men doo vilany take of it' vengeaunce. [2659] ffor þat' app*er*teneþ & longeþ oonly to the Iuges. ffor þei shul venge vilanyes and Iniuries. [2660] And herfore þoo two autoritees þat' ȝe han saide aboue ben oonly vnderstonden in þe Iuges [2661] for whan þei suffre ouer ¶ mykel þe wrongges and vilenyes to be done

wiþ-out' ponshinge. [2662] þei som*m*one nat' a man al only forto doo newe wrongges but' þei co*m*maunden it' [2663] ¶ Also a wise man seiþ þat' þe Iuge þat' correcteþ not' þe synner. Co*m*maundeþ and biddeþ hym to synne [2664] and þe Iuges *and* [1]souereynes myȝten in her londe so moche suffre of þe Shrewes and mysdoers [2665] þat' þei shulden bye suc̄h suffraunce by processe of tyme wexen of suc̄h power and myȝt'. þat' þei shuld putte out' þe Iuges and souereynes from her places. [2666] and at' þe last' do hem lose her lordshippes

[2667] ¶ I put' caas riȝt' nowe ȝe had leue to venge ȝou. [2668] I say þat' ȝe ben nouȝt' of myght' ne power' as nowe to venge ȝou. [2669] ffor ȝif we wil make comp*ar*isoñ vnto þe myȝt' of ȝo*ur* aduersaries. ȝe shul fynde in many þingges þat' I haue shewed ȝo^u^ er þis þat' her condicioñ is better þan ȝoure. [2670] And þerfore say I þat' it' is good as nowe þat' ȝe suffre and be pacient'

[2671] ¶ fferþer more ȝe knowen wel þat' after þe comon Sawe it' is a woodenesse a man to stryue wiþ a strenger. or wiþ a more myȝty man þan hym self. [2672] And forto stryue wiþ a man of euen strength̄ þat' is to say wiþ as stronge a man as he is it' is perile. [2673] And forto stryue wiþ a waikere man it' is foly [2674] And þerfore shuld' a man flee stryuynge as mochel as he myȝt' [2675] ¶ ffor Salomon saiþ. It is a grete worship a man to kepe hy*m* from noyse and stryf. [2676] And ȝif it' so byfalle or happe þat' a man of gretter myȝt' and strenger þan þou art' do þe greu*au*nce. [2677] stody and byse þe raþer to stille þe same greu*au*nce þan forto venge þe [2678] ¶ ffor Senec' saiþ That' he putteþ hym in grete perile. þat' stryueþ wiþ a gretter man þan he is him self [2679] And Caton saiþ. ȝif a man of hier astate or of degre or more myȝty þan þou. do þe an oþer greu*au*nce suffre hym [2680] for he þat' onys haþ greued þe

may anoþer tyme releue þe. and helpe þe. [2681] ȝit sette I caas ȝe haue boþ myȝt and licence forto venge ȝou. [2682] I saie þat þer bene ful mony þingges þat shuld restreyn ȝou of vengeance takinge [2683] and make ȝou forto enclyne to suffre and forto haue pacience in þe wrongges þat bene done to ȝou. [2684] ffurst and forward ȝif ȝe wil considere þe defautes þat bene in ȝoure persone. [2685] for which defautes god haþ suffred ȝou to haue tribulacioñ as I haue saide byfore [2686] ¶ ffor þe Poete saiþ. þat we ouȝten paciently þe tribulacions to take *þat* commen to vs whan þat we þenken and consideren *þat* we han deserued to haue hem [2687] ¶ And seint Gregor seiþ. That whan a man considereþ wel þe nombre of his defautes and of his synnes [2688] þan peynes and þe tribulacioñs þat he suffreþ semen þe lasse vnto him [2689] And in as moche as him þenkeþ his synnes more hevie and greuous [2690] in so moche his peyne is þe liȝter / and þe [1]esier vnto hym [2691] ¶ Also ȝe owen to enclyne and bowe ȝoure herte to take þe pacience of our lorde Ihesu crist. As seiþ seint Petre in his epistel [2692] Ihesu crist he seiþ haþ suffred for vs and ȝeuen ensample to euery man to folowe *and* to swee hym [2693] for he did neuere ¶ synne ne neuere cam a vileyns worde out of his mouþe [2694] whan men cursed hym he cursed hem nouȝt [. . . . . *no gap*] [2695] Also þe grete pacience ¶ whiche þat seintes þat bene in paradis han had in tribulacions þat þei han suffred wiþ-outen her desert or gilt. [2696] aught moch stire ȝou to pacience [2697] ¶ fferþermore ȝe shal conforte ȝou to haue pacience [2698] consideringe þat þe tribulaciõns of þis worlde. but litel ¶ while enduren. and soon bene ypassed and goon [2699] And þe Ioye *þat* a man secheþ to haue by pacience in tribulacions is perdurable. after þat þe

appostel seiþ. in his Epistel [2700] ¶ The Ioie of god he seiþ is perdurable. þat' is to saye euerlastinge. [2701] Also troueþ and bileueþ stedfastly þat' he nys nat' wel norsshed ne wel ytauȝt' þat cannot' haue pacience ne wil not' receyue pacience [2702] ¶ ffor Salomon seiþ. That' þe doctrine and þe witte of man is knowe by pacience. [2703] And in anoþere place he seiþ. þat' he þat' kepeþ hym by pacience ¶ gouerneþ him by grete prudence [2704] ¶ And þe Same Salomon seiþ The angre and þe wrethful man makeþ noyses. and þe pacient' man attempreþ and stilleþ him self [2705] ¶ he saiþ also it' is more worthī to be pacient' þan for to be riȝt' stronge. [2706] And he þat' may haue lordship of his owne hert' is more to preise þan he þat' by his fors takeþ grete Citees and townes [2707] Therfore seiþ seint' Iame in his Epistell. þat' pacience in a grete vertue of perfectioñ.

[2708] [*Certes, dit Mellibée, je vous ottroye, dame Prudence, que patience est une grant vertu,*] [2709] But' euery man may nat' haue þe perfectioñ þat we seken. [2710] ne I. am not' of þe nombre of riȝt' perfit men. [2711] for myn hert' may neuer be in pees! vnto þe tyme it be venged [2712] ¶ And al be it' so þat' it' was grete perile to myne ¶ ennemyes to done me a vilanye in takinge vengeance vpon me. [2713] ȝit' token þei noon hede vppon þe perile. but' fulfilleden her wik¶ked wille and her corage [2714] And þer-for me þenkeþ men ouȝt' not' repreue me þouȝe I putte me in a litel perile to venge me. [2715] and þouȝe I doo a grete excesse. þat' is to say þouȝe I venge oon outrage by a noþere

[2716] ¶ O quod dame prudence ȝe say ȝoure wille. and as ȝou likeþ. [2717] But' in no caas of þe world a man shuld not do outrage ne excesse forto venge hym [2718] ¶ ffor Cassidore seiþ þat' as euel doþ he þat' auengeþ him by outrage. as he þat' doþ þe

out*rage*. [2719] And þer-for ȝe shul venge ȝou after þe ordere of ryȝt' þat' is to saiñ [1]by þe lawe and by noon excesse ne noon outrage. [2720] And also if ȝe wil venge ȝou of þe outrage of ȝoure aduersaries in oþer manere þan riȝt' comaundeþ ȝe synnen [2721] ¶ And þerfore saiþ Senec'. þat' a man shal neuere venge schrewdenesse by schrewdenesse / [2722] And if ȝe say þat' riȝt' axeþ a man to defende violence by violence. and fiȝtynge by fiȝtinge. [2723] certes ȝe say soth̃. wha*n* þe defence is done anoon with̃-outen interuaħe or wiþ-out' taryinge or delay. [2724] for to defenden hym and not' forto vengen hym. [2725] And it' bihoueþ þat' a man put' such̃ attemp*er*ance in his defence [2726] þat' men haue no cause no matere to repreuen hym þat' defendeþ hym of excesse and of outrage. [*car autrement ce seroit contre droit et contre raison* (Le Mén.)] [2727] ¶ P*ar*de ȝe knowen weħ þat' ȝe maken noon defence as nowe forto defende ȝou but' forto venge ȝou [2728] And so sweþ it' þat' ȝe han no wille to doo ȝoure dede attemp*er*ally. [2729] and þerfore me þenkeþ þat' pacience is goode ¶ ffor Salomon seiþ: þat' he þat' is nat' pacient' shal haue grete harme

[2730] ¶ Certes quod meleby I graunte ȝou þat' whan a man is impacient' and wrooþ of þat' þat' toucheþ hym nat' and of þat' þat' p*er*teneþ not' to hym. þouȝe it' harme him it' is no wondere [2731] ¶ ffor þe lawe saiþ. þat' he is coupable. þat' entermeteþ hym or melleþ hym wiþ suche þinge as app*er*teyneþ nat' to hy*m* [2732] ¶ And Salomon saiþ. That' he þat' entermeteþ hy*m* of þe noise or of þe strif of an oþer man is like to hy*m*. þat' takeþ þe hounde by þe eeres [2733] and [*aussi comme cellui qui prent le chien par les oreilles*] is oþer while biten wiþ þe hounde. [2734] ¶ Riȝt' in þe same wise is it' reson þat' he haue harme þat' by his impacience medleþ him of þe noise of an oþer man. wher þat' it' app*er*teneþ not to him [2735] ¶ But' ȝe knowe wel þat' þis dede and

þis greef *and* þis dissese toucheþ me riȝt' nygh̃. [2736] And þerfore þouȝe I be wroþe and impacient' it' is no mervaile. [2737] and sauynge ȝoure grace I can not' see þat' it' myȝt' gretlich̃ harme me. þouȝe I toke vengeañce [2738] ffor I am Riccher and more myȝty þan myn enemyes bene. [2739] And wel knowen ȝee þat' by money and by hauyng' grete possessioñs bene alH̃ þingges of þis world̃ ygouerned [2740] ¶ And Salomon seiþ. þat' alH̃ þingges obeyen to monay.

[2741] [*Prudence, quant elle oy son mary vanter de sa richesse et de sa puissance, et soy esjouir, et*] dispreising' þe poor of his aduersaries. Tho she spak and seide in þis wise. [2742] Certes dere sire I graunt' ȝou þat' ȝe bene riche and myȝty. [2743] and þat' richesses ben good to hem þat' han wel goten hem. and þat' wel can vsen hem [2744] ffor riȝt' as þe body of a man! may not' lyue wiþ-out' þe saule. no more may it' live wiþ-out' temporal goodes. [2745] And by richesse may a [1]man gete hym grete worship [2746] ¶ And þerfore seiþ Pamphilles. ȝif an neterdes douȝtere he saiþ be riche she may chese of a thowsand̃ men [*lequel qu'elle veult pour son mary* [2747] *car* (Le Ménagier, tome i)] [. . *no gap in the MS.*] oon wil not' forsake her ne refuse her. [2748] And þus Pamphilles seith̃ also ¶ ȝif þou be riȝt' happy þat' is to say riȝt' riche þow shalt' fynde a grete nombre of felawes and frendes. [2749] And ȝif þi fortune that' þou wexe poor. fare wel frendship and felawship. [2750] for þou shalt bene allone wiþ-oute eny companye. but' ȝif it' be þe company of poor folk' [2751] // And ȝit seiþ þis Pamphilles more ouer þat' þei þat' bene thral and bonde of lynage. shullen be made worþi and noble by richessesse [2752] And riȝt' so as by richesses þer commen mony goodes. Riȝt' so by pouert' þer commen mony harmes and euels. [2753] ffor grete pouerte con-

streyneth a man to doo mony euels [2754] ¶ And þerfore clepeþ Cassidore pouert'. þe modere ruyne. [2755] That' is to say þe modere of ouerþrowinge or falling' downe [2756] ¶ And þerfore Pers Alfons saiþ. Oon of þe grettest' aduersitees of þis world' is [2757] whan a free [man] by kinde is constreyned by pouert' to eten þe almesse of his enemye [2758] ¶ And þe Same Seiþ Innocent' in oon of his bokes. He seiþ þat' soriful and vnhappy is þe conditiõ of a poor begger. [2759] ffor ȝif he askeþ not' his mete he dyeþ for hungere. [2760] [*et se ils demandent, ils meurent de honte;*] Necessite constreyneþ hy*m* to aske. [2761] And þerfore seiþ Salomon. That' better is to dye þan forto haue suche pouerte [2762] ¶ And as þe Same Salomon seiþ Better is to dye a bitter deeþ þan forto lyuen in swich wise [2763] ¶ By þise resons þat' .I haue seide vnto ȝowe and by mony resons þat' I coude saie [2764] I *gra*unte þat' richesses bene good to hem þat' geten hem well And vsen hem wel. [2765] And þerfore wil I shewe ȝow how ȝe shul haue ȝou. and howe ȝe shal bere ȝou in gaderinge of richesses. and in what' manere ȝe shul vsen hem

[2766] ffirst' ȝe shul geten hem with-out grete desire. by good leisere sokingly. and not' ouerhastely. [2767] ffor a man þat' is to desiringe to geten richesse. abandoneþ hy*m* to þeft' and to all oþer evels [2768] ¶ And þerfore seiþ Salomon ¶ he þat' hasteþ hym to bysily to wexe ricche: shal be noon Innocent' [2769] ¶ He saiþ also þat' þe Richesse þat' hastely co*m*meþ to a man. sone and liȝtly gooþ and passeþ from hym [2770] ¶ But' þat' richesse þat' co*m*meþ alway litel and litel. wexeþ alway and multplieþ [2771] ¶ And sire ȝe shul gete richesse by ȝoure witte. and by ȝoure travaile. vnto ȝoure profite [2772] and þat' wiþ-outen wronge or harme doynge to eny o*þere* p*er*sone. [2773] ffor þe lawe

seiþ ¶ That' he ne makeþ nat' hym self riche. ȝif he do harme to a noþer wight' [2774] ¶ This is to say þat' nature defendeþ and forbedeþ by ryght'. þat' [1] no man make him self riche wiþ þe harme of a noþ*ere* per*so*ñ. [2775] ¶ And Tullius saiþ. þat' no sorowe ne no drede of deth̃ ne of þouȝt' þat' may falle to a man [2776] is so mochel aȝeinst' nature as a man to encrees his owne profite to þe harme of anoþer man [2777] ¶ And þouȝe þe grete men and þe riche men geten rychesses more liȝtly þan þou. [2778] ȝit' shalt' þou nat' be ydel ne sclowe to þi *pro*phete. ffor þou shalt' in al þinge and in al wise fle ydelnesse [2779] ¶ ffor Salomon seiþ: That' ydelnesse techeþ a man to do mony eucles [2780] ¶ And þe Same Salomon seiþ. þat' he þat' travailleþ and bysieþ him to tille his londe shal ete þe brede. [2781] But' he þat' is ydel and casteþ him to doo no bysynesse ne occupacioñ shal falle into pouert' and dye for hu*n*gere. [2782] And he þat' is ydel and sclowe. can neuer fynde conable tyme forto do his profite [2783] ¶ ffor þer is a versifiour þat' saiþ. That' þe ydel man excuseþ hy*m* in wyntere. be cause of þe grete colde. And in somer by enchesoñ of þe grete hete [2784] ¶ ffor þise causes seiþ Catoñ ¶ Wakeþ and enclyneþ ȝou not' ouermoche forto sclepe. for ouer moche rest' norsheþ and causeþ mony vyces [2785] ¶ And þerfore seiþ seint' Ierom ¶ Doþ som*me* good dedys þat' þe deuel whic̃h is oure enemye ne fynde ȝou nat' vnocupied. [2786] ffor þe deuel ne takeþ not' liȝtly vnto his worchinge such̃ as he fyndeþ occupied in goode werkes

[2787] ¶ Than þus in geting' of Richesse ȝe moten flee ydelnesse / [2788] ¶ and afterward' ȝe shul vse þe richesse which̃ ȝe han geten by ȝoure witte and by ȝoure travaile [2789] in such̃ a manere þat' men holde ȝou nat' to scarce. ne to sparinge. ne to fool large. þat' is to sayn ouer large a spendere [2790] ¶ ffor riȝt' as men blamen an Auarous man by cause of his scarsete and chyncherie [2791] In þe same manere is he blamed

þat' spendeþ ouer largely. [2792] ¶ And þerfore seiþ Catoñ. vse he saiþ þe Richesse þat' þou hast' ygeten. [2793] in such̃ a manere. þat' þer be no matere ne cause to calle þe neiþer wrecche ne chyche. [2794] ffor it' is grete shame a man to haue a poor hert' and a rich̃ purs [2795] ¶ He seiþ also þe goodes þat' thow hast' geten vse hem by mesure þat' is to say. spende mesurably [2796] ffor þei þat' folyly waasten and dispenden þe goodes þat' þei haue. [2797] whan þei han no more p*ro*pre of her owne þei shape hem to take þe goodes of a noþer man. [2798] ¶ I say þa*n* þat' ȝe shal flee Auarice / [2799] vsinge ȝoure richesse as in such̃ mane*re* þat' men say not' þat' ȝoure goodes bene yburied. [2800] but' þat ȝe [1]haue hem in ȝoure myght' and in ȝoure weldinge [2801] ffor þe wise repreeueþ þe Auerous man and seiþ in twoo versus. [2802] Wherto and whi bereþ a man his goodes by his Auarice and knoweþ wel þat' nedes he most' deye. [2803] for deþ is þe ende of euery man as in þis present' lif [2804] and for what' cause or enchesoñ ioyneþ he him or knytteþ he hym so fast' vnto his goodes [2805] þat' aH his wittes mowe not' disseuere hy*m* or departen hy*m* fro his goodes. [2806] and knoweþ wel or aught' knowe þat' whan he is dede he shal no þinge bere wiþ him out' of þis world [2807] ¶ And þerfore seiþ seynt' Austyne. That' þe Auerous man is likned into helle. [2808] þat' þe more it' swoloweþ. þe more desire it' haþ to swalowe and deuowre [2809] And as wel as ȝe wolde eschwe to be cleped an Auarous man or chyche [2810] as wel shul ȝe kepe ȝou and gouerne ȝou so and in such̃ a wise so *þat'* men ne cleped ȝou not' fool large [2811] ¶ Therfore seiþ Tulli*us* The goodes he seiþ of þine hous shuld nat' bene hidde ne kept' so cloos but' þat' þei myȝt' be opned by Pite and by bonairte [2812] þat' is to sayn to ȝeue hem p*ar*te þat' han grete nede [2813]

Ne þi goodes shuld not' bene so open to be euery mannys goodes [2814] ¶ Afterward' in getinge of ȝoure richesse & in vsyng' of hem ȝe shul alway haue þre þingges in ȝoure hert'. [2815] þat' is to sayn. our lorde god. conscience and good name [2816] ¶ ffirst' ȝe shul haue god in ȝoure hert' [2817] and for no ricchesse ȝe shul doo no þinge which̄ may in eny manere displese crist' þat' is youre creatour' and ȝour' maker' [2818] ¶ ffor after þe worde of Salomon. it' is better to haue a litel good with þe loue of god [2819] þan to haue moche good and tresour' and lese þe loue of' his lorde god [2820] ¶ And þe prophet' seiþ. þat' better it' is to bene a good man. and haue a litel good and tresour'. [2821] þan to be holden a shrewe and haue grete Ricchesse. [2822] And ȝit' say I ferþermore þat' ȝe shulden alway doon ȝour' bisynesse to gete ȝou richesses [2823] so þat' ȝe gete hem wiþ good conscience [2824] ¶ And þe Appostel saiþ. Ther nys no þinge in this world' of which̄ we shuld haue so grete Ioye as whan our conscience bereþ vs witnesse of good [2825] ¶ And þe wise man saiþ. The substañce of a man is ful good whan synne nys nat' in his coscience [2826] ¶ Afterward' in getinge of ȝoure richesses / and in vsing' of hem [2827] þe most' haue grete bysynesse and grete diligence þat' ȝoure [1]good name be alway kept' and conserued [2828] ¶ ffor Salomon seiþ That' better it' is and more availleþ a man to haue good name þan to haue grete richesse [2829] ¶ And þerfore he saiþ in a noþer place Doo grete diligence seiþ Salomon in kepinge of þi frend' and of þi good name. [2830] ffor it' shal lenger abide wiþ þe þan eny tresour' be it' neuere so precious. [2831] And certes he shuld not' be cleped a gentil man. þat' after god and good conscience alle þingges left' ne doþ his dyligence and bysynesse to kepen his good name [2832] ¶ And Cassidore saiþ: þat' it' is signe of a gentill hert' whan a man desireþ and loueþ to haue a goode name./

[2833] ¶ And þerfore seiþ seint' Austyne. Ther bene two þingges þat' are necessarye and nedefull. [2834] & þat' is good conscience and good loos. [2835] that' is to sayn good conscience to þine owne *per*sone inward' And good loos for þi neighbour outward'. [2836] And he þat' tresteþ him so moche in his good conscience [2837] þat' he displese and setteþ at' nouȝt his good name or loos. *and* rekkeþ not' þouȝe he kepe not' his good name. he nys but a cruell cherle

[2838] ¶ Sir*e* now haue I schewed ȝou how ȝe shuld doo in kepinge rychesse and howe ȝe shuld' vsen hem [2839] ¶ I see wel þat' for þe trust' þat' ȝe haue in ȝour*e* ricchesse. ȝe wil meuen werr*e* and bataille [2840] I counsaile þat' ȝe bygynne no werr*e*. in trest' of ȝoure Richesse. ffor þei ne suffisen not' werres to Mayntene [2841] ¶ And þerfore saiþ a Philosophre. That' man þat' desireþ *and* wil algates haue werr*e*. shal neuere haue suffisaunt. [2842] ffor þe Richer þat' he is þe gretter dispence mote he make ȝif he wil haue worship or victorie [2843] ¶ And Salomon saiþ þat' þe gretter richesse þat' a man hath. þe gretter dispendours he haþ. [2844] And dere sir al be it' soo. þat' for ȝoure richesse ȝe mowe haue mochel folk'. [2845] ȝit' byhoueþ it' not'. ne it' is not' good to bygynne werr*e*. þer as ȝe may in oþer manere haue pees vnto ȝoure worship and profite [2846] ¶ ffor þe victorie of batailles þat' bene in þis world' lith not' in grete nombre or multitude of puple. ne in vertue of man. [2847] but' it' lith in þe wille and in þe hand of our' lord god almyȝty [2848] ¶ And þerfore Iudas makabeus which was goddys knyȝt [2849] whan he shuld fiȝt' aȝeinst his aduersarie þat' had a gretter nombre and a gretter multitude of folk' And strenger þan was þis puple of Makabe. [2850] ȝit' he recomforte his lytel [1]companye and saide riȝt' in þis wise [2851] ¶ Also liȝtly quod he may o*ur* lord god almyȝty ȝeue victorie to fewe folk'

as to monye [2852] ffor þe victory of bataille commeþ not' by þe grete nombre of puple [2853] but' it' commeth fro our lord of heuene. [2854] And dere sire for as moch As þer nys no man certeyn ȝif it' be worþ þat' god ȝeue hym victorie [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] or nouȝt'. aftere þat' Salomon seiþ. [2855] Therfore euery man shulde gretly drede werrus to bygynne [2856] And by cause þat' [in] batailles [are] many periles [2857] & [it may] happen oþer while þat' as sone is þe grete man sclayn as þe litel man [2858] ¶ And as it is ywritte in þe secondē book' of kingges The dedes of batailles bene auenturous and no þinge certeyn. [2859] for as liȝtly is oon hurt' wiþ a spere as a noþer [2860] And þerfore it' is grete perile in werre. Therfore shuld a man flee and eschewe werre in as mochel as a man may goodly ./ [2861] ffor Salomon seiþ: He þat' loueþ perile shal falle in perile

[2862] After þat' dame prudence had spoken in þis manere Melebius answerd' and saide. [2863] I see wel dame *þat'* by ȝoure faire wordes and by ȝoure resons þat' ye han schewed me. þat' þe werre likeþ ȝou no þinge. [2864] But' I haue not' ȝit' herde ȝoure counsaile howe I shal doo in þis nede.

[2865] Certes quod she I counsaile ȝou þat' ȝe accorde wiþ ȝoure aduersaries *and* þat' ȝe haue pees *with* hem [2866] ¶ ffor seint' Iame seiþ in his Epistel ¶ That' by concord' and pees þe smale richesses wexen grete [2867] And by debate and discord' þe grete richesse fallen doun. [2868] And ȝe knowe wel þat' oon of þe grettest' and most' souereyn þinge þat' is in þis world' is vnite and pees [2869] And þerfore saiþ our lord Ihesu crist' to his apostel in þis wise [2870] ¶ Wel happy and blessed bene þei þat' louen and pu[r]chasen pees for þei bene called children of god [2871] ¶ A quod Meleby nowe se I wel þat' ȝe loue not' myn h[o]noure and my worship. [2872] ȝe knowen wel þat' myne

aduersaries haue bygonnen þis debate and brigge by her outrage [2873] And ȝe See wel þat' þei ne requiren ne preien me nat' of pees ne þei asken not' to be recounsailled. [2874] wil ȝe þan þat'· I goo meke and obeye me to hem. and crye hem mercye. [2875] ffor soth þat' were not' my worship. [2876] ffor riȝt' as men sayñ þat' ouer grete hu*m*blesse engendreþ dispisinge. so fareþ it' by to grete hu*m*ilite & mekenesse

[2877] ¶ Than bygan dame prudence to make semblau*nt*' of wreth and saide. [2878] Certes sir*e* sauf ȝoure grace I loue ȝo*ur* honoure and ȝoure profite as I doo myn owne and euere ha[1]ue done [2879] ne ȝe ne mowen not' sayn þe cont*ra*rie. [2880] And ȝit' ȝif I had saide þat' ȝe shulde haue p*u*rchased þe pees *and* þe reconsiliacioñ I ne had not' moche mystake me ne saide amys [2881] ffor þe Wise man seiþ. The dissencion bygynneþ by a noþer man. *and* þe reconsilynge by þi silf. [2882] And þe p*ro*phete saiþ. fflee schrewdenesse and doo goodnesse [2883] ¶ Seke pees and folowe it' in as moche as in þe is. [2884] ¶ ȝit' seiþ he not' þat' ȝe shul Swe raþer to ȝoure aduersaries for pees þan þei shullen to ȝou. [2885] ffor I knowe wel þat' ȝe bene so hard' herted. þat' ȝe wil do no þing' for mee [2886] ¶ And Salomon seiþ: þat' he þat' haþ ouer harde an hert'. at' þe last' shal myshappe and mystide

[2887] ¶ Whan Melebius had seye dame prudence make semblau*nt*' of wreth̃ he saide in þis wise [2888] ¶ Dame I prey ȝou þat' ȝe be not' displesed of þingges þat' I saye. [2889] ffor ȝe knowe wel þat' I am angry and wrooþ and þat' is no wondere. [2890] and þei þat' bene wrooþ. weten not' wel what' þei doon ne what' þei seyn [2891] ¶ And þerfore the p*ro*phete seiþ. That' trowbled eyen haue no clere siȝt'. [2892] But' saiþ on and counsaile me as ȝe likeþ. for I am redy to doo riȝt' as ȝe wil desire. [2893] and if ȝe repreue me of my foly .I am þe more holden to loue ȝou and to preise

3ou [2894] ¶ ffor Salomon saith That he þat reprouеþ hym þat dooþ foly. [2895] he shal finde gretter grace þat he þat deceyueþ hym wiþ swete wordes

[2896] Than said Dame prudence. I make no semblant of wreþe ne of anger but for 3oure grete profite [2897] ¶ ffor Salomon seiþ: he is more wrooþ þat repreueth or chideþ a foole for his folye schewing him semblañt of wreþe [2898] þan he þat supporteþ hym or preiseþ him in his mysdoynge at laugheþ at his foly [2899] ¶ And þis same Salomon seiþ afterward þat by þe soriful vese of a man þat is to sayn by sory and heuy countenaunce of a man [2900] þe foole correcteþ and amendeþ him self

[2901] ¶ Than sayde Meleby I shal not conne answere to so mony resons as 3e putten to me and shewen / [2902] saiþ shortely 3oure wille. and 3oure counsaile and I am al redy to fulfille and performe it

[2903] ¶ Than Dame prudence diskeuered al her wille vnto hym and saide [2904] I counsaile 3ou þat 3e abouen al þinge maken pees bytwene god and 3owe [2905] and beþ recoñsailled vnto him and to his grace. [2906] ffor I haue seid 3ow here byfore ¶ God haþ suffred 3ou to haue þis tribulacioñ and dissese for 3oure synnes. [2907] And if 3e doo as I say 3owe [1]god wil sende 3oure aduersaries vnto 3ou [2908] and make hem to falle at 3oure fete redy to 3oure wille and 3oure comaundement [2909] ¶ ffor Salomon seiþe: Whan þe condicion of man is plesaunte and likinge to god [2910] he chaungeth þe hertes of þe mannes aduersaries and constreyneþ hem to bysechen him of pees and of grace [2911] ¶ And I prei 3ou lat me speke wiþ 3oure aduersaries in privy place. [2912] for þei shal not knowe it be 3oure wille ne 3oure assent. [2913] And þan whan I knowe her wiH and assent: I may counsaile 3ou þe more suerly

[2914] ¶ Dame quod Meleby doþ 3our wiH and

ȝoure lykingᵗ [2915] ffor I putte me fulli in ȝoure disposicioñ and ȝoure ordyn*aun*ce

[2916] ¶ Than dame prudence whan [she] segh̄ þe wille of her husbonde and she delyuered her and toke avice by hure self [2917] þenkinge by her self ᵗ how she myȝtᵗ bringe þis nede vnto a goode conclusioñ and a good eende [2918] ¶ And whan she seeȝe her tyme she sentᵗ for þise aduersaries to come vnto her into a pryvy place [2919] and schewed wisely vnto hem þe greetᵗ goodnesse þatᵗ co*mm*eþ of pees. [2920] and þe grete harmes *and* periles þatᵗ ben in werre. [2921] and saide to hem in a goo[d]ly manere howe þatᵗ hem ouȝten to haue grete repentance [2922] of þe Iniurie and wronge þatᵗ þei hadden ydone. to Meleby her lorde and vnto her and vnto her douȝterᵛ.

[2923] And whan þei herden þe goodly wordes of dame Prudence [2924] þei weren so supprised and rauisshed and hadden so gret Ioie of herᵛ þatᵗ wondere was to telle [2925] ¶ O lady quod þei ȝe ¶ han schewed vnto vs þe blissinge of swetnesse aftere þe Sawe of dauid þe p*ro*phete. [2926] ffor þe reconsilinge which̄ we ne bene notᵗ worþi to haue in no manere. [2927] butᵗ we ouȝtᵗ to requiren itᵗ wiþ grete contricioñ and hu*m*ilite [2928] ȝe as ȝoure grete goodnesse haþ presented vnto us [2929] Now se we wel þe science and þe konyngᵗ of Salomoñ is ful trewe [2930] for he seiþ þatᵗ swete wordes multiplien and encresen freendes. and maken schrewes to be debonayre and meke

[2931] Certes quod þei we putten oure dede and al our matere. *and* cause alhoolly in ȝoure good wille [2932] and bene redy to obeye to þe speche and þe comaundementᵗ of my lord Melebye [2933] ¶ And þerfore our dere and benigne lady we preien ȝou and bysechen ȝou as mekely as we conne or mowen [2934] ¶ þatᵗ [1] itᵗ like vnto ȝoure grete goodnesse to fulfille in dede ȝoure goodly wordes [2935] ffor we consideren and knowen

þat' we han offended and greued my lorde Melebie out' of mesure [2936] so fer forþ þat' we bene nat' a power to maken his a[men]dys. [2937] and þerfore we oblie and bynde vs and our frendes forto doo al his wille and his comaundement' [2938] But' *per*auenture he haþ such hevynesse and such wrethe to vs ward by cause of our defence [2939] þat' he wil enioyne vs suche peyne as we may not' bere ne susteyne [2940] ¶ And *þer*fore noble lady we biseke to ȝoure wo*mm*anly pite. [2941] takeþ such avisement' in þis nede þat' we ne our frendes ben not' disherited ne distroied þorgh oure foly

[2942] Certis q*uo*d Prudence it' is an harde þinge and riȝt' perilous [2943] þat' man put him al vtterly in þe arbitracion and Iugement' and in þe myght' and power of his enemyes [2944] ¶ ffor Salomon seiþ Leueþ and ȝeueþ credence to þat I shal sayn ¶ I say q*uo*d he ȝif puple and gouernours of holy church· [2945] to þi sone. to þi wif and þi frende. ne to þi broþer. [2946] ne ȝeue þou neuere myȝt' ne maistrie of þi body while þou lyuest' [2947] ¶ Nowe sith þat' he forfendeþ. þat' man shuld not' ȝeue to his broþer ne to his freende þe myȝt' of his body [2948] Than by a strenger reson he forfendeþ and forbedeþ. a man to ȝeue hym self vnto his enemye [2949] ¶ And naþeles I counsaile ȝowe þat' ȝe ne mystrest' not' my lorde [2950] for I woote wel and knowe verrely þat' he is debonaire and meke. large *and* curtays. [2951] *and* no þinge desirous ne coueitous of good ne ricchesse. [2952] ffor nys no þinge in þis world þat he desireþ. saue oonly worship and hono*ur* [2953] ¶ fferþermore I knowe wel and I am riȝt' swre þat' he wil no þinge doo in þis nede wiþ-out' counsaile of me. [2954] And I shal so worche in þis cause þat' by þe grace of *our* lorde god ȝe shul be recounsailled vnto vs.

[2955] Than seide þei wiþ oon vois. Worshipful

lady we putten vs and oure ¶ goodes al fully in ȝoure willo and in ȝoure disposisicioñ [2956] and bene redy forto come what' day þat' it' likeþ vnto ȝoure noblenesse to lymyte vs or asigne vs [2957] forto make oure obligacioñ and be bounde as stronge as it' likeþ vnto ȝoure goodnesse [2958] þat' we may fulfille þe will of ȝow *and* of my lord' Melebye.

[2959] And whan dame prudence had ¶ [1]herde þe answers of þise men she bad hem go ageyn prively [2960] And she retorned to her lord' Meleby and told hy*m* how she fand his aduersaries ful repentaunte [2961] knowlechyng' ful lowly her synnes and trespases / and howe þei weren redy to suffren al peyne. [2962] requiryng' and preying' hy*m* of me*r*cye *and* pite

[2963] ¶ þan saide Meleby he is wel worþ to haue p*ar*done and forȝeuenesse of his synne. þat' excuseþ nat' his synne. [2964] but' knowlecheþ and repenteþ hy*m* asking' Indulgence [2965] ¶ ffor Senec' say. There is þe remyssioñ and forȝeuenes: wher as þe confession is. [2966] ffor confession is neighbo*ur* to Innocence. [2967] ¶ And he saþ in an oþer place: þat' he þat' haþ shame of his synne and knowlecheþ it: is worþi remyssioñ. And þerefor' I assent' and conferme me to haue pees. [2968] But' it' is good þat' we doo it' not' wiþ-out' þassent' of oure frendes

[2969] Than was prudence riȝt' glad and Ioyful and saide þis [2970] ¶ Certes sire quod she ye han wel and goodly answerd'. [2971] ffor riȝt' as by the counsaile of assent' and helpe of ȝoure frendes ȝe haue beñ stired to venge ȝou. and make werre. [2972] Riȝt' so wiþ-outen her counsaile shal ȝe not' accorde ȝou ne haue pees wiþ ȝoure aduersaries [2973] ¶ ffor þe lawe saiþ. Ther nys no þing' so good by way of kynge as þinge to bene vnbounde by hym þat' it' was ybounde

[2974] And þan Dame prudence wiþ-outen delay or tarynge sent' anoon Massagers for her kynne and for her olde frendes whiche þat' were trewe *and* wise [2975]

and tolde hem by order in þe presence of Me[le]bye al þis matere as it is aboue expressed and declared. [2976] and preyed hem þat þai wolde ȝeuen her avice *and* counsaile what best were to doo in þis nede [2977] ¶ And whan Melibies frendes had taken her avise and deliberacioñ of þis forseide mat*er*e [2978] and hadden examyned it by grete bysynesse and grete diligence. [2979] þei ȝaf ful counsaille forto haue pees *and* rest. [2980] And þat Melebius shuld receyuen wiþ good hert his aduersaries to forȝeuenesse and Mercy.

[2981] ¶ And whan dame prudence had herd passent of her lord Melebius and þe counsaile of his frendes [2982] accorde wiþ her wille and her entencioñ [2983] she was wonderly glad in hert and saide [2984] Ther is and olde prouerbe quod She seiþ: þat þe goo[d]nesse þat thou maist doo þis day do it [2985] and abyde nat til [*le soir ne*] to morowe. [2986] And þ*er*for [1]I counsaile ȝou þat ye sende ȝoure massagers whicħ þat bene discrete and wise. [2987] vnto ȝoure aduersaries Telling hem in ȝ*our* bihalf [2988] þat ȝif þei wil trete of pees and accorde. [2989] þat þei shapen hem wiþ-oute delay or taryng to come vnto vs. [2990] Whicħ þinge was p*er*fourmed in dede. [2991] And whan þise trespasours and repentynge folk of her folies þ*a*t is to say þe aduersaries of melebye [2992] hadden herd what þe massagers saiden vnto hem. [2993] þei were riȝt glad and Ioiful and answerden ful mekely and benygnely [2994] ȝeeldinge graces and thonkingges to her lorde Melebie and to al his companye [2995] and shopen hem wiþ-oute lay to goo wiþ þe massagers and obey to þe Comaundement of her lorde Melebius

[2996] ¶ And riȝt anoon þei token her way to þe courte of Meleby [2997] and token to hem some of her trewe frendys to make feiþ for hem and forto bene her borowes [2998] ¶ And wha*n* þei were co*m*men to

þe presence of melebius he seide hem þise wordes [2999] It' stondeþ þus quod Melebie and soþ it' is þat' ȝe [3000] causelees and wiþ-out' skille and reson [3001] haue done grete iniuries and wronges to me and to my wiff Prudence And to my ¶ douȝtere also. [3002] ffor ȝe han entred into myn hous by violence [3003] and haue done such outrage þat' alle men knowe wel þat ȝe han deserued þe deeþ [3004] And þerfore wil I knowe and witt' of ȝou [3005] wheþere ȝe putte þe punsshment' and þe chastisement' and þe vengeaunce of þis outrage in þe wiH of me and of my wif Dame Prudence or ȝe wil not

[3006] Than þe wisest' of hem þre answerd for hem alle and seide [3007] ¶ Sire quod he we knowe wel þat' we bene vnworþi to come vnto þe Suerte vnto so grete [a lord] and so worþi as ȝe bene. [3008] ffor we han so gretely mystaken vs and haue offended and gilted in such a wise. ageyn ȝoure hegh lordship. [3009] þat' trewly we han deserued þe deeþ. [3010] But' ȝit' for þe grete goodnesse and debonairte þat' aH men don witnesse of ȝoure persone / [3011] We submytten vs to ȝour excellence and benygnyte of ȝoure gracious lordship. [3012] for we bene redy to obey to aH ȝoure comaundementes [3013] bysekinge ȝou þat' of ȝoure merciable pite ȝe wil considere our grete repentaunce and lowe submyssion [3014] and graunt' us forȝeuenesse of oure outrageous trespas and offence. [3015] ffor wel we knowen þat' ȝoure liberaH grace and mercie streccheþ forþere into goodnesse þan doþ our outrageous trespas into wikkednesse. [3016] [1]al be it' þat' cursedly and dampnably we han ygilt' aȝeinst' ȝoure grete lordship

[3017] ¶ Than Melebye toke hem vp fro þe grounde ful benygnely [3018] and receyued her oblacioñs *and* her londes by her oþes vpon her plegges and borowes. [3019] And assigned hem a certeyn day to retourne vnto his courte [3020] forto accepte and to receyue þe sentence and

Iuggement' of þat' Melebye wil comaunde to be done to hem by þise causes to-fore seide. [3021] which̄ þingges ordeyned / euery man · retourned home to his hous

[3022] ¶ And̄ whan þat' Dame Prudence segh̄ her tyme. she f[r]ayned and asked her lorde [3023] what' vengeaunce he þouȝt' to take on his aduersaries

[3024] To which̄ Melebius answerd̄ and saide. Certys quod I I thenk' and purpoos me fully [3025] to disherite hem and al þat' euere þei haue and forto putte hem in exile for euere moo

[3026] ¶ Certis quod dame Prudence þis were a cruel sentence *and* mochel aȝeinst resoñ. [3027] ffor ȝe bene riche ynouȝe and haue no nede of oþer mennys good / [3028] and ȝe myȝten lightely gete ȝou a coueitous name [3029] Whiche is a vicious þinge and ouȝte to bene eschewed̄ of euery man [3030] ¶ ffor aftere þe sawe of þe word̄ of þe apostel Coueityse is roote of alle harmes [3031] And þerfore it' were better' to ȝou to lese so mochel good of ȝoure owne. þan forto take of her good in þis manere. [3032] ffor bettere it is to lese good with̄ Worship þan it' is to wynne good wiþ vileny and shame./ [3033] And euery man ouȝt' to doo his diligence of his bysynesse to geten hym a good name. [3034] And ȝit' shal he not' oonly bysyen him in kepinge his good name [3035] But' he shal also enforsen him alway to doon somme þinge by which̄ he may renouelle his good name [3036] ¶ ffor it' is written ¶ The olde good lose or good name of a man · is sone done or goon or passed whan it' is not' newed ne renouelled [3037] And as touching' þat' ȝe sayn ȝe wil exile ȝoure aduersaries [3038] þat' þenkeþ me moch̄ aȝeinst' resoñ. and out' of mesure [3039] considered. þe power þat' þei han ȝeuen ȝou vpon hem self [3040] ¶ And it' is writen ¶ that' he is worþi to lesen his privelegge þat' mysvseþ þe myȝt' and þe power þat' is ȝeuen hym [3041] And I sette caas ȝe myȝt' enioyne hem þat' peyne by riȝt' and lawe [3042] which I

trowe ȝe mowe not' doo [3043] I say ȝe myȝt' not' put' it' to execucioñ *per*auenture / [3044] and þan were it' likly to retourne to þe werre as it was byforne [3045] And þerfore ȝif ȝe þan wol þat' men doñ [1]ȝou obeisaunce ȝe most' deme more curtaisly [3046] This is to sayn ȝe most' ȝeue more esy sentences and Iuggementys. [3047] ffor it' is writen þat' he þat' most' curteisly comaundeþ to hy*m* men most' obeyen [3048] ¶ And þerfore I prey ȝou þat' in þis necessite and in þis nede ȝe cast' ȝou to oouercome ȝou*re* hert'. [3049] ffor Senec' saiþ. He þat' ouerco*mm*eþ his hert' ouerco*mm*eþ twies./ [3050] ¶ And Tullius saiþ. Ther nys no þing' so comendable in a grete lord' [3051] as whan he is debonaire and meke and apaisetħ hym self lightly. [3052] And I prey ȝou þat' ye wil forbere nowe to do vengeaunce [3053] in suchħ a maner *þat ȝour* good name may be kept' and conserued [3054] and þat' men mow han a cause and matere to preise ȝou of pite and of mercy [3055] and þat' ȝe haue no cause to repent' ȝou of þinge þat' ȝe doōn [3056] ¶ ffor Senec' saiþ. He ouerco*mm*eþ in an euel manere þat' repenteþ hym of his victorie. [3057] Wherfore I prey ȝou lat' mercy be in ȝoure hert' [3058] to þe effecte and entent' þat' god almyȝty haue mercy on ȝou in his last' Iuggement' [3059] ¶ ffor seint' Iame seiþ in his Epistel ¶ Iuggement' wiþoute mercy shal be do to hym þat' haþ no mercy on another wiȝt'

[3060] Whan Melebius had herd' þe grete skilles and resons of dame· Prudence and her wise enformaciōn and techinge. [3061] His hert' gan enclyne to þe wille of his wif. considerynge her trewe entent'. [3062] Confermed. hym anōn and contened fully to worchen aftere her counsaile [3063] and þonked god of whome procedeþ al goodnesse þat' hym sent' a ¶ wif of so grete discreciōn [3064] And whan þe day come þat' his adu*er*saries shuld' apperen· in his presence [3065] he speke

to hem ful goodely And saide in þis wise. [3066] Al be it' soo þat' of ȝoure pride and hegh̃ presumpciõn and foly. and of ȝoure negligence and vnkonyng' [3067] ȝe han mysborn ȝou. and trespased vnto me [3068] ȝit' for as moche as I See and byholde ȝoure grete hu*m*ilite [3069] and þat' ȝe bene sory and repentaunte of ȝoure giltes. [3070] It' constreyneþ me to do ȝou grace./ and mercy [3071] and wherfore I receyue ȝou to my *grace*. [3072] And forȝeue ȝou vtterly al þe offences Iniuries and wrongg*es* þat' ȝe have done aȝeinst' me and myne [3073] to þis effecte and to þis eende þat' god of his endelees mercye [3074] wil at' þe tyme of our deyinge forȝeue vs our giltes þat' we han trespased vnto hym in þis wrecched world'. [3075] ffor doutelees ȝif we bene sory and repentaunte of þe synnes and giltes in þe which̃ we han trespased i*n* þe siȝt' of oure lorde god. [3076] he is so free and so merciable. [3077] þat' he [1]wil forȝeue vs oure giltes [3078] and brynge vs to þe blisse þat' neuere haþ eende .AmeN.

¶ **Here endeþ chaucers tale of melebye**

And here bygynneþ þe prologe of þe Monke./ [*on leaf 246, back*]

Whan ended was my tale of Meleby
And of Prudence and her benygnyte 3080
Our hoostᵗ saide as I am feiþful man
And by þe corps precious Mat*r*ian
I had leuer þan a barel of ale.
Thatᵗ good loue my wif had herdᵈ þis tale 3084
ffor she nys no þinge of suc̄h pacience
As was þilk Melebies Dame Prudence
By goddes bones whan I bete my knaues
She bringeþ me forþ þe grete clubbed staues 3088
And crieth Slee þoo dogges euerychoñ
And breke of hem boþ bak and booñ
And ȝif þatᵗ eny neighbour of myne
Wil natᵗ to my wif in churc̄h enclyne 3092
Or be so hardy to hure do trespas
Whan she co*mm*eþ hoom she rampeþ in my face
And crieþ fals cowardᵈ kepe and wreke þi wiff
By goddes bonys I wil haue þi knyff 3096
And þow shaltᵗ haue my distaff and go spynne
ffrom day to nyghtᵗ þus she wil bygynne
Allas she seiþ þatᵗ euer I was yshape
To wedde a Milksop or a cowardᵈ ape 3100
Thatᵗ wil be ouercome wiþ euery wiȝtᵗ
Thow darstᵗ notᵗ stonde by þi wyues riȝtᵗ
Þis is my lif butᵗ ȝif þatᵗ I wil fiȝtᵗ
Outᵗ atᵗ þe door anoon I motᵗ me diȝtᵗ 3104
Or ellys I am lestᵗ butᵗ ȝif þatᵗ I.
Be like a wilde lyoñ fool hardy.
I wote wele she wil do me sclee som day
Som*m*e neighhoure of myne and þennes renne away 3108
ffor I am perilous wiþ knyf in honde
Al be itᵗ I dar natᵗ her withstonde

ffor she is bigge in Armes be my faith̄
þat' shal he fynde þat' hir mysdoþ or saiþ 3112
But' lat' vs passe away fro þis matere
My lorde þe Monke quod he be mery of chiere [leaf 247]
ffor ȝe shul telle a tale trewly
Loo Rouchester' stant' here fast' by 3116
Ride forþ myn owne lord breke not' ȝoure game
But' by my trouþe I knowe nouȝt' ȝoure name
Whedere shal I calle ȝou my lord' dan Iohn̄
Or danne Thomas or danñ Alboñ 3120
Of what' hous be ȝe by ȝoure fader' kyn
It' is a gentile pasture þat' ȝe goon In
Thow art' not' like a penannte or a goost'
Thus to þe Monke seide oure oste 3124
Vppon my faiþe þou art' some officere
Som worþi Sexteyñ or som selerere
ffor by my fadere saule as to my dome
Thow art' a maistere whan þou art' at' home 3128
No poor cloistrere ne no novise
But' gouernour boþ wily and wise
And þer-wiþ-al of braune and of bonys
A wel farynge p*er*sone for þe nonys 3132
I pray god ȝeue hym confusioñ
That' þe furst' brouȝt' to Religioñ
ffor þou woldest' haue bene a tredeforþ ariȝt'
Haddest' thou as grete leue as þou hast myȝt' 3136
To p*er*forme al þi lust' in engendrure
Thow haddest' ygete mony a creature
Allas whi werest' þow so wide a cope
God ȝeue sorowe to me and I were pope 3140
Not' oonly þou but' euery myȝty man.
Thouȝe he were shore brode vpon þe pan.
Shuld haue a wiff for al þe world' is lorñ
Religion haþ take vp al þe cōrn 3144
Of tredyng: and we burile men bēñ but' shrympes.
Of feble trees þer co*m*men symple ympes.

This makeþ þat oure heires bene so sclendere
And feble þat þei may not wel engendere 3148
This makeþ þat our wyues wil assay
Relygious folk for þei may bettere paye
Of Venes payment þan may we
God woot no lasshebourues pay ȝe [leaf 247, back] 3152
Be nat wroþe my lorde þouȝe I play
ffor ofte in game a soþe I haue herd say
This worþi monke toke alle in pacience
And saide I wil doon al my diligence 3156
As fer as sowneth unto honeste
To telle ȝou a tale or two or þre
And ȝif þe list to herken hiderwarde
I wil ȝou say þe lif of seint Edward 3160
Or elles furst tregedies wil I ȝou telle
Of which I haue an hundred in my Selle
Tregedie is forto seyn a certeyn storie
As olde bookes make vs memorie 3164
Of hem þat stood in grete prosperite
And is falle out of hie degree
Into Miserye and endeþ wrechedly
And þei bene versefied comonly 3168
Of sex fete of which men callen exametron
In proose eke bene endited mony on
In metere eke and in sondry wise
loo þis claring auȝt ynow suffise 3172
Now herkeneþ ȝif ȝou like to here
But furst I ȝou biseche in þis manere
þouȝe I be ordred tel not þise pingges
Be it of Popes Emperours or kynggés 3176
After her Age as men may writen fynde
But telle hem som byfore and some behynde
As it commeþ nowe in my remembraunce
Haue me excused of myn ignoraunce 3180

¶ Here bygynneþ þe prologe of þe monke

[*No breaks between the stanzas in the MS, except for the red headings.*]

And here bygynneþ þe monkes tale [*on leaf* 247, *back*]

I wol by-waile in ma[ne]re of tregedie ¶ **þe tale**
þe harme of hem þat' stonden in hie degrie
And fallen so þat' þer nys no remedye
To bringe hem out' of her aduersite 3184
ffor certeynly whan fortune list to flee
þer may no man of hir' þe cours wiþholde
Lat' no man trest' on blynde *prosperite*
Beþ ware of þise ensamples trewe *and* olde [leaf 248] 3188

¶ Primo de Lucifero

At' lucifere þouȝe he an aungel were
And nat' a man. but' at' hym I wil bygynne
ffor þouȝe fortune may noon aungel dere
ffroo high̃ degre þer felle he for hys synne 3192
Downe into helle wwere he ȝit' is Inne
O lucifer briȝtest' of aungels alle
Now art' þou Sathanas þat' maist' nat twynne
Out' of myserie in which̃ þat' þou art' falle 3196

¶ De Adam./

Loo Adam in þe feelde of Damyssene
Wiþ goddes oune fyngers wrouȝt' was he
And nouȝt' bygeten of mannes sperme vnclene
And wolt' al Paradys sauyng' oon tree 3200
Had neuere worldly man so hie degre
As Adam vnto he wyþ nyce gou*ernañ*ce
Was dryue out' of his high̃ *prosperite*
To laboure and to helle and to meschañce 3204

¶ De Sampsone

Lo sampson þat' was annunciate
By þe Aungel longe er his natiuite
And was to god almyȝty consecrate
And stoode in noblesse while þat he myȝt see 3208
Was neuer such a noþer as was he
To speke of strength̃, and þerto hardynesse
But' to his wyues tolde he his secree
Thourgh̃ which̃ he sclouȝe hym self for wrecchednesse 3212

¶ Sampson þis noble and myȝty championñ
Wiþ-oute wepen saaf his hondes tway
He sclough̃ and also to-rent' þe lyoñ
Toward̃ his weddyng' walking' by þe way 3216
His fals wif coude hym so wel plese *and* pray
Til she his counsaile knewe *and* she vntrewe
To his foos his counsaile gan to wrye
And hym forsoke and toke anoþer newe 3220

Thre hundred foxes toke Sampson for Ire
And alle her tailes he to-gyder bonde.
And Sette þe foxes tailles a fire [leaf 248, back]
ffor he in euery taile had knytte a bronde 3224
And þei brent' al þe cornes of þat' londe
And al her oliuerus an vynes eke
A thowsand he sclough̃ eke wiþ his honde
And had no wepon but' an asses cheke 3228

Whan þei were sclayn so þrested hym þat he
was wel nye lorn wherfor he gan to preye
þat' god wolde of his peyne haue som pite
And sende hym drynke or ellys most' he deye 3232
And out of his asses cheke þat' was so dreye
Out' of a wonge toth sponge anoñ a welle
Of whiche he dronk' ynouȝe shortly to [. .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] telle 3236

By verray force at' Algason vpon a nyȝt'
Maugre the philistiens of þat' Cite
þe gatys of þat' toune he haþ vp pliȝt'
And on his bak caried hem haþ he 3240
Hie vpon an hille þat' men myȝt' See
O noble almyȝty sampson leef and dere
Haddest' þou nat' to wommen told þi secre
In al þis world ne had ben þi pere 3244

This Sampson neiþer Sither dronk ne wyne
Ne on his hede come neiþere rasour' ne Shere
[. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
ffor al þe strength in his heres were 3248
And fully xx^tt^ wynter ȝeer by ȝere
He had of Israel þe gouernaunce.
But' he shal wepe mony a tere
ffor wo*m*men men bryngen to meschaunce 3252

To his lemmon his Dalyaunce he told
That' in his herus al his strengthe lay
And falsly to his foomen she hy*m* sold
And sclepinge in her barme vpon a day 3256
She made to clippe or shere his heer away
And made his foomen all his craft' to aspyen
And whan þat' þei foonde hy*m* in þis aray
þei bounde hym fast' and put' out' his yen 3260

But' er his heer was yclipped or shaue
Ther was no boonde wiþ which men myȝt' hy*m* bynde
But' now he is in prison put' in a kaue [leaf 249]
Where as þei made hym at' þe querne grynde 3264
O noble Sampson strengest' of mankynde
O whilom Iuge in glorie & richesse
Now maist' þow wepe wiþ þine eyen blynde
Siþens þow art' from wele falle into wrecchednesse 3268

The eende of þise catyfs was as I shal say
His ffoomen made a feest' vpon a day
And made hym as her foole to-forn hem play
And þis was [in] a temple of a grete aray 3272
But' at' þe last' he made a foule afray
ffor he two postes shoke and made he*m* falle
And downe fill' temple and al þer it' lay
And sclough̄ hym self and eke his foomen alle 3276

This is to say þe princes eu*er*echoñ
And eke a thowsand bodyes were þere sclayñ
Wiþ falling' of þe grete temple of stoñ
Of Sampson ne wil I no more sayñ 3280
Be ware of þise ensamples olde *and* playn
þat' no man telle her counsaile to her wyves
Of suche þinge as þei wolde haue secre fayn
ȝit' þat' it' touche her ly*m*mes or hir lyues. 3284

¶ **De Ercule./**

Of Ercule this souereyn conquerour
Syngen his werkes lewde and high̄ reno*un*.
ffor in his tyme of strength̄ he bere þe flour
He slowe and raft' þe skyn fro þe lyo*un* 3288
He of Sentawres laide þe boost' a do*un*
He Arpies sclowe þe cruel briddes felle
He golden apples byraft' þe drago*un*
He drowe out' Serbyrois þe hound of helle 3292

He sclowe þe cruel tyraunt' Buserus
And made his hors to frete hym flessh̄ *and* boñ
He sclough̄ þe verrey serpent' venemous
Of Achiles two hornes breke he oñ 3296
An he sclowgh̄ Cacus in a kaue of stoñ
He sclowgh̄ þe geaunte Anteus þe strong'
He sclowe þe grisly boore and þat' anoñ
And bare þe hede vpon his nek' longe [leaf 249, back] 3300

Was neuer wiȝt' siþen þe world' bygan
þat' sclowe so mony monstres as did he
þorgh̄-out' þis wide world' his name ran
What' for his strength̄ and for his bounte 3304
And euery Rewme went' he forto See
He was so stronge no man myȝt' hy*m* lette
And boþ þe worldes ende saiþ trophe
In stede of bondes he a piler' sette 3308

A lemman had þis noble Campioñ
That' hight' Dianyre fresh̄ as may
And as þe clerkes maken mencioñ
She haþ hym sent' a shert' fresh̄ *and* gay 3312
Allas þis shert' and welaway
Evenymed was subtilly wiþ-ah̄
That' ere þat' he had wered it' half a day
It' made his bones from his flesh*e* falle 3316

But' naþeles some clerkes her excusen
By ooñ þat' hight' Nessus þat' it' maked.
Be as be may I wil her not accusen
But' on his bakke þe shert' he weres al naked. 3320
Til þat' his flesh̄ was for þe venyme blaked
And whan he segh noon oþer remedye
In hote cooles he haþ hy*m*-self raked
ffor wiþ no venyme deyned he to dye 3324

Thus sterf þis worþi myghty Ercules
Lo who may trust' on fortune eny throwe
ffor hym þat' foloweþ al þis world' of prees
Er he be ware is oft' yleide ful lowe 3328
fful wise is he þat' hym self can knowe
Beþ war*e* for whan þat' fortune lest' to glose
þan waiteþ she her man doun to throwe
By suche a way as he wold leest' suppose 3332

¶ De rege Nabugodonosor. /

The myȝty trone þe precious tresour
The glorious sceptre and real mageste
þat' had þe kynge Nabugodonosor
Wiþ tunge vnneþ may / discrived be 3336
He twyes nam Ierusalem þe Cite [leaf 250]
The Vesseꝗ of þe temple he wiþ hym lad
At' Babiloyne was his souereyn See
In which his glorie and his delit' he had. 3340

The fairest' children of þe blood Royal
Of Ierusalem he ded do gilde anonon
And maked eche of hem to bene his cherle
Amon[ge] aꝗ oþer Danyel was oon 3344
þat' was þe wysest' childe of euerychoñ
ffor he þe dremes of þe kynge expowned
Wher as in Caldey clerk' was þer nooñ
þat' wist' to what' fyne his dremes sowned 3348

This prowde kynge lete make a stature of gold
Sixty cubites longe and Seuen in brede
To whiche ymage boþ ȝonge and olde
Comaunded he to loute and haue in drede 3352
Or in a fornays ful of flawmes rede.
He shal be brent' þat' wold nat' obeye
But' neuere wold assent' vnto þat' dede
Danyel ne his ȝonge felawes tweye 3356

This kynge of kyngges prowde was and elate
He wende god þat' sitte in maieste
Ne myght hym nat' byreue of his estate
But' sodeynly he lost' his dignyte 3360
And like a beest' hym semed forto be
And ete hay as an oxe and lay þerout'
In reyne wiþ wilde beestes walked he
Til a certeyn tyme was come aboute 3364

And like an Egles fetheres was his heeres
His nailes like briddes clawes were
[Til] God releued hym a certeyn ȝeres
And ȝaf hym witte and þan wiþ mony a tere 3368
He þonked god and euere his lyf in fere
was he to doon amys in more trespas
And or þ*at* tyme ylaide was on his bere
He knewe wel þat god was ful of myȝt' and *grace* 3372

De Baltazar *dicti* R*egis* Nabugodonosor filio.

His soñe which̄ þat' hiȝt' Baltazar
That' heelde þe regne aftere his faders day [leaf 250, back]
He by his fadere couþe not' be war
ffor proude he was of hert' and of aray 3376
And eke an ydolater was he ay
His high̄ astate assured hy*m* in pride
But' fortune cast' hy*m* doune *and* þer he lay
And sodeynly his regne gan devide 3380

A feest' he made vnto his lordes *alle*
Vppon a tyme and made he*m* bliþe be
And þan his officers can he calle
Gooþ bryngeþ forþ þe vessels q*uod* he 3384
Which̄ þat' my fader in his prosp*er*ite
Out' of þe temple of Ier*usal*em byraft'
And to oure hegh*e* goddes þonke wee
Of honur' þat' our elders wiþ vs laft' 3388

His wif his lordes and his concubynes
Ay dronken þe whiles her appetite last'
Out' of þise noble vessels sondry wynes
And on a wal þis kyng' his eyen cast' 3392
And sawe an honde armelees þat' wrote ful fast
ffor fere of which̄ he quoke and sighed sore
This honde þat' baltazar made so soor agast'
Wrote mane techel phares *and* no more 3396

In al þat' londe Magytien was *þer* noon
þat' couþe expoune what' þis l*ett*re ment'
But' Danyel expouned it' anoon
And saide king' god þi fader sent' 3400
Glorie and honour' Regne tresour and rent'
And he was proude and god no þing' dradde
And þerfore god grete wretħ vpon hy*m* Sent
And hym by-raft' þe regne þat' he hadde 3404

He was out' cast' of ma*n*nys co*m*panye
Wiþ asses was his habitacioñ
And ete hay as a beest' in wete *and* drye
Til þat' he knewe by grace *and* by resoñ 3408
That' god of heuene haþ domynaciañ
Ouer euery regne and euery creature
And þan had god of hy*m* compassioñ
And hym restored his regne and his figure [leaf 251] 3412

Eke þou þat' art' his sone art' proude also
And knowest' aħ þise þingges prively
And art' rebel to god and art' his foo
Thow drank' eke of his vessels boldly 3416
Thi wif eke and þi wenches synfully
Drank' of þe same vessels sondry wynes
And heried fals goddys cursedly
*þer*fore to þe shapen grete peyn es 3420

This hand was sent' fro god þat' on þe waħ
wrote mane techel phares trest' me
Thy regne is done þou waiest' not' at aħ
Devided is þi regne and it' shal be 3424
To Medes and to p*er*ses ȝeuen quod he
And þilk' same nyȝt' þe kyng' was sclawe
And Darius occupieþ his degre
They he þerto nad neiþer riȝt' ne lawe 3428

Lordyngges her-by ensamples mowe ȝe take
How þat in lordship is no sikernesse
ffor whan fortune wil a man forsake
He bereþ away his regne and his richesse 3432
And eke his frendes boþ more and lesse
And what man haþ frendes þorowe fortune
Mishappe wil make hem enemyes I gesse
This prouerbe is ful soþe and ful commune 3436

¶ De Cenobia :/

CEnobia of Palamere þe quene
As writen Persiens of her noblesse
So worþi was in Armes and so kene
þat no wiȝt passed hure in hardynesse 3440
Ne in lynage ne in oþer gentilnesse
Of þe kyngges blood of percy is she descended.
I say þat she nad not moost fairenesse
But of hure Shap she myȝt not be amended 3444

Fro childhode I fynde þat she fledde
Office of wommen and into woode she went
And Mony a wilde hertes blode she shedde
wiþ arowes brode þat she to hym sent 3448
She was so swift þat she anoon hem hent [leaf 251, back]
And whan þat she was elder she wold kille
Lyoñs. lybardes and beres alto-rent
And in hure armes weelde hem at her wille 3452

She durst wilde beestes dennes seke
And renne in þe mountayn al þe nyght
And sclepe vndere a bussh she coude eke
Wrastelen by verray force and myght 3456
Wiþ eny yong man were he neuer so wiȝt
Ther myght no þinge in her Armes stonde
She kepte her maidenhode from euery wiȝt
To no man deyned hure to be bonde 3460

But at þe last her frendes han hure maried
To Odonak a prince of þat Cite
Al were it so þat she hem longe taried
And ȝe shal vnderstonde how þat he 3464
Haþ suche fantasies as had she
But naþelees whan þei were knyt in fere
þei lyueden in Ioie and in felicite
ffor eche of hem had oþer leef *and* dere 3468

Sauf oon þinge that ȝe nolde neuere assent
By no way þat he shulde by hire lye
But onys for it was her pleyn entent
To haue a childe þe world to multiplie 3472
And also sone as she myȝt aspie.
That she was nouȝt wiþ child *with* þat dede
þan wil she suffre hym doon his fantasie
Eftsone and not but onys out of drede 3476

And ȝif she were wiþ childe at þilke cast
No more shulde he playe þilke game
Till xl^ti daies were past
Than wolde she onys suffre hy*m* doo þe same 3480
Al were this Odenake wilde or tame
He gate no more of hure. for þus she saide
It was to wyues lechery an shame
In oþer caas if þat men wiþ hem plaide 3484

Twoo sones by þis odynak had She
The whiche she kepte in vertue and i*n* letture
But nowe vnto oure tale turne wee [leaf 252]
I say þat worshipful creature 3488
And wise þer-wiþ and large *with* mesure
So penyble in þe werre and curteyse eke
No more labour myȝt in werre endure
was noon þouȝe in al þis world men shuld seke 3492

Hire Riche aray myȝt' not' be tolde
As wel in vessel as in clopinge
She was al clad in perry and in gold
And eke she laft' not' for noon huntynge 3496
To haue of sondry tungges folk' knowing'
whan pat' she leisere had and forto entende
To lerne bookes was al hure likynge
How she in vertue myȝt' her lyf dispende 3500

And shortely of pis storie forto entrete
So dughty was her husbonde as she
That' pei conquered mony regnes grete
In pe Orient' wip mony a faire Cite 3504
Appertenent' vnto pe mageste
Of Rome and wip stronge hond helde hem fast'
Ne neuer myȝt' her foomen doon hem flee
Ay whiles pat' Odenake dayes last' 3508

Her batailles who so lest' hem forto rede
Ageyn sopere pe kyng' and oper moo
And howe pat' alle pe processe felle in dede
whi she conquered and what' titel had perto. 3512
And after of her mescheef *and* of her woo
Howe pat' she was byseged and Itake
Lat' hym vnto my maister Petrarke goo.
pat' writte Inowe of pis I vndertake. 3516

Whan Odenak' was dede she myȝtily
pe Regnes heelde and wip hur propre honde
Aȝeinst' her foos she fauȝt' trewly
pat' per nas kyng no prince in al pat londe 3520
pat' he nas glad ȝif he pat' grace fonde
pat she ne wolde vpon his lond' werreye
wip hire pei made alliance by bonde
To bene in pees *and* lat' hure ride and pleye / 3524

The Emp*er*our of Rome Claudius [leaf 252, back]
Ne hym byforn þe Romayne galiene
Ne durst' neuer be so coragius
Ne noon ermyne ne noon Egipciene 3528
Ne Surryene ne noon Arabiene
Wiþ-in þe feelde þat' durst' wiþ hire fiȝt'
Lest' þat' she wolde wiþ hure hondes hy*m* scleen
Or wiþ her mayne putten hem to fliȝt' 3532

In kyngges habite went' her sonys twoo
As heires of her regnes atte
And hermanno and Tymalao
Her names were as p*er*ciens hem calle 3536
But' ay fortune haþ in her hony galle
This myȝty qwene may not' longe endure
ffortune out' of her regne made her falle
To wrecchednesse and to mysauenture 3540

Aurelion whan þat' þe gouern*aun*ce
Of Rome come into his hondes tweye
He shope vpon þis quene to do vengeau*n*ce
And wiþ his legyons he toke his waye 3544
Toward' Cenoby and shortly forto seye
He made hur flee and at' þe last' her hent'
And fettred hure and eke her children tweye
And wan þe londe and home to Rome is went' 3548

Amonge þise oþer þingges þat' he wan
her chare þat' wrouȝt' was w*ith* gold' and perre
This grete Romayn þis Aurelian.
haþ wiþ hym lad for þat' men shuld see 3552
Byforn hys trihumphe walkeþ she
Wiþ Gilt' cheynes in her nek' hongynge
Corowned she was as after her degre.
And ful of Perry charged her cloþinge 3556

Allas fortune she þat' whilom was
Dreedful to kyngges and to emperours
Now gaureþ alle þe puple on hir allas
And she þat' helmed was in stronge stoures 3560
[. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
Shal on her hede bere a Vitremyte
And she þat' bare þe sceptre ful of floures
Shal bye a dystaf her coste forto quite [leaf 253] 3564

[*Peter the Cruel, of Spain.*]

O noble o worþi peter glory of Spayñ
Whoom fortune helde so hiȝe in maieste
Wel ouȝt' men þi pitous deeþ complayñ
Thi bastard broþer made þe to flee 3568
And aftere at' a siege by subtilte
Thowe were bytraied and lad to his tent'
Wher as he wiþ his owne honde sclogh̃ þe
Succeedynge in þi regne and in þi rent' 3572

The felde of snowe wiþ þe Egle blak' þer-Inne [*Bertrand du Guesclin.*]
Caught' wiþ þe lyme rodde colours as þe glede
He brewe þis cursednesse and al þe synne
þe wicked nest' was werker of þis nede. 3576
Nouȝt' charles Olyfere þat' ay toke good hede
Of trouþe of honure but' Armorekke [*Oliver de Mauny of Britanny.*]
Geniloñ Olyuer corupte for nede
Brouȝtest' þis worþi king' in suche brekke 3580

[*Peter of Cyprus.*]

¶ worþi Petre kynge of Cipre alsoo.
That' Alisaunder wan by high maistrie
fful mony a heþen wrouȝtest' þou for woo.
Of which̃ þine owne leeges had enuye 3584
And for no þing' but' for þi chyualrie
They in þi bed han sclayn þe by þe morue
Thus gan fortune gouerne *and* gie
And out' of Ioie bringe into sorowe 3588

[*Bernabo Visconti, of Milan.*]

Of Melane grete Barnabo Viscounte
God of delite and scourge of lumbardie
Whi shuld not I þi fortune acounte
Siþ in estaat þou clomben were so hie 3592
Thy broþer sone þat was þi double alie
ffor he þi Neuewe was *and* sone in lawe
Wiþ-in his prison made þe to die
But whi ne howe wote I þat þou were sclawe 3596

[*Ugolino, Count of Pisa.*]

Of the Erle Hugelyne of pise þe languo*ur*
Ther may no tunge telle for pite
But litel out of Pise stant a tour
In whiche towre in prison put was he 3600
And wiþ hym bene his litel children þre
þe eldest scarcely .v. ȝere was of age [leaf 253, back]
Allas fortune it was grete crueltee
Such briddes forto putte into a cage 3604

¶ Dampned he was to dye in þat prison
ffor Roger which þat bisshop was of pise
Had on hym made a fals suggestion
Thorgh which þe puple gan on hy*m* arise 3608
And putten him in prison in such a wise
As ȝe han herd and mete and drinke he had.
So smal þat vnneþes it may suffise
And þerwiþal it was ful poor and bad 3612

In a day byfelle þat in þat houre
Whan þat his [mete] was wonte to be wrouȝt
þe Gailour shette þe doores of þe toure
He herde it wel but he seegh it nouȝt 3616
And in his hert anoon þer felle a þouȝt
þat þei for hunder wolde done hy*m* dyen
Allas quod he allas þat I was wrouȝt
þer-wiþ þe teeres felle from his eyen. 3620

His ȝonge sones þre þer were of age
Vnto hym seide fadere whi do ȝe wepe
whan wil þe Gailoure brynge our potage
Is þer no morsel brede þat' [ye] doo kepe 3624
I am so hungry þat' I may nat' sclepe
Nowe wolde god þat' I myȝt' sclepen euere
þan shuld noon hungre in myn herte crepe
þer nys no þinge sauf brede þat' me were leuere 3628

Thus day by day þis childe gan to crie
Til in his faders barme adoune it lay
And saide fare wel fadere I mote dye
And kissed his fadere and dyed þe same day 3632
And whan þe wooful fadere did hym say
ffor woo his armes two he gan to bite
And saide allas fortune and welaway
Thy fals whele my woo I may al wite 3636

His childer [wende] þat' hit' for hunger was
þat' he his armes gnowe *and* nouȝt' for woo.
þei seiden fadere do not' so allas
But' raþer ete þe flessh̃ vpon vs twoo. [leaf 251] 3640
Our flesshe þou ȝaf vs take our flessh̃ vs froo
And ete ynouȝe riȝt' þus to hym þei saide
And after þat' wiþ-Inne a day or twoo
þei leide hem doune in his lappe *and* dayde 3644

Hym self dispeirede eke and for hu[n]ger starf'
Thus ended is þe myȝty erle of pise
ffor highe astate fortune fro hym carf
Of his tregetrie it' ouȝte ynouȝe suffise 3648
Who so wil here it' in a lenger wise
Redeþ þe grete poete of ytaile
þat' hiȝte Daunte, for he can it' devise
ffrom poynt' to poynte for no þing' wil he faile. 3652

¶ **De nerone Imp*er*atore.**

Al þouȝe þat' Nero were as vicious
As eny feende þat' lieth ful lowe adoune
ȝit' he as telleþ vs swetheneus
This wide world' had in subieccioñ 3656
Both̃ eest' and west' and Septemptrioñ
Of Rubies Saphires and peerles white
Were al his [cloþes] browd[ed] vp and doune
ffor he [in] gemmes grete gan delite 3660

More delicate more pompous of araye
More proude was neuere Emp*er*our þan he
þat' ilk*e* cloþe þat' he had wered a day
Aftere þat' tyme he nolde it' neuer see 3664
Nettes of gold threde had he grete plente
To fisshen in Tibre whan hy*m* list' to pleye
His lustes [were] as lawe in his degre
ffor fortune as his frende wold hy*m* obeye 3668

He Rome brent' for his delicasie
The Senatoures he sclouȝe vpon a day
To here howe þat' men wolde wepe *and* crie
And sclouȝe his broþer and by his sustere [lay] 3672
His modere made he in pitous aray
ffor he her wombe sclitte to byhold'
wher he conceyued was so welaway
That' he so litel of his moder tolde. 3676

No teer out' of his eyen for þat' siȝt' [leaf 254, back]
Ne came but' saide a faire wo*m*man was she
Grete wondere is þat' he cowde or myȝt'
Be Domes man of her dede bewte. 3680
The wyne to brynge comaunded he
And dronke anoon noon o*þer* woo he made
Whan myȝt' is Ioyned vnto cruelte
Alas to depe wil þe venyme wade 3684

In ȝouthe a maister had þis emperour
To teche hym letture and curtesye
ffor of moralite he was þe floure
As in his tyme but ȝif bokes lye 3688
And whiles his maister had of hym maistrie
He made hym so conynge *and* so souple
That longe tyme it was or tyrannye
Or eny vice in hym durst vncouple 3692

This Seneca of which [that] I devise
By cause Nero had of hym such drede
ffor he for vices wold hym chastise
Discretely as by worde and nat by dede 3696
Sire wolde he sayne an Emperour mot nede
Be vertuous and hate tyrannye
ffor which he hym in bathe made to blede
On booþ his Armes til he most dye 3700

This Nero had eke of a custumance
In ȝouþe aȝeinst his maister forto rise
Which afterward hym þouȝt a grete greuance
Therfore he made hym dye in þis wise 3704
But nathelees þis Senec þe wise
Chees in a bathe to dye in þis manere
Raþer þan han a noþer tormentri[s]e
And þus haþ Nero sclayn his maister dere 3708

Now felle it so þat fortune lest no lenger
þe highe Pride of Nero to cherice
ffor þouȝe he were stronge ȝit was she strenger
She þouȝte þus by god I am to nyce 3712
To sette a man þat is fulfild in vice
In heghe degre and Emperour hym calle.
By god out of his sete I wil him trice. [leaf 255]
whan he leest weneþ sonnest shal he falle. 3716

The puple roos vp on hym on a nyȝt
ffor his defaute and whan he it aspied.
Out of his doores anoon he haþ hym diȝt
Allone and þer he wende haue bene alied. 3720
He knokked fast and ay þe more he cried
The faster schitten þei þe doores alle
Þo wist he wel he had hym self mysgied.
And went his way no lenger dorst he calle 3724

The puple cried and rombled vp and doun
That wiþ his eeres herde he what þei seide
Where is þis fals traitour þis Neroun
ffor fere almost out of his witte he breide 3728
And to his goddes pitously he seide
ffor socoure but it myȝt nat be-tyde
ffor drede of þis him þouȝt þat he dyde
And ranne into a gardeyne hym to hyde 3732

And in þis gardyne fonde he cherles tweye
That sitten by a fuyre ful gret *and* rede
And to þe cherles twey he gan to preie
To scleen hym and to girden of his hede 3736
That to his body whan þat he were dede
Were no despite ydon for his diffame
Hym self he sclowȝe he coude no bett*er* rede
Of which fortune lough and made a game 3740

[*Holofernes.*]

Was neuere Captayne vnder a kinge ¶ De Olyferno./
þat regneþ more putte in subiectioun
Ne strenger was in feelde of al þinge
As in his tyme ne gretter of renoun 3744
Ne more pompous in high presumpcioun
Than olyferne which that fortune ay kest
So lycorously and lad hym vp and doun
Til þat his hede was of er þat he wist 3748

Not oonly þat this world haþ of hym awe
ffor lesinge of Richesse and of liberte
But he made euery man renaye his lawe
Nabugodonosor was lord saide he. 3752
Noon oþer god shulde honoured be [leaf 255, back]
Aȝeinst his heest no wiȝt dar trespace
Saue in Betulia a stronge Cite
Wher Eliachym a preest was of þat place 3756

But take kepe of þe deth of Olyferne
Amydde þe hooste he dronke lay al nyȝt
Wiþ-Inne his tente large as is a beerne
And ȝit for al his pompe and al his myȝt 3760
Iudith a womman as he lay vpriȝt.
Selepinge his hede of smote *and* fro his tent
fful prively she stale from euery wiȝt
[. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] 3764

[*Antiochus.*]

What nedeþ it of kynge Antiochus ¶ **De Antiocho Rege**
To telle his high and Ryal maieste
His hie pride his werke venymus
ffor suche anoþer was neuer noon as he 3768
Redeþ which þat he was in machabe
And redeþ þe proude wordes þat he seide
And whi he felle fro his prosperite
And in an halle how wrechedly he deide 3772

Fortune hym had enhaunsed so in pride
That verrely he wende he myȝt atteyne
Vnto þe sterres vppon euery side
And in a balaunce to wey þe mounteyne 3776
And alle þe floodes of the See Restreyne
And goddes puple had he most in hate
Hem wolde he selee in torment *and* [in] peyn
wenynge þat god ne myȝt his pride abate 3780

And for þat' Nichamour and thymothe
wiþ Iwes were venquysshed myȝtely
Vnto þe Iwes sucħ an hate had he
That' he bad graþed his chare ful hastifly 3784
And swore and saide ful dispitously
Vnto Ier*usal*em he wolde eftsone
To wreke his Ire on it' ful cruelly
But' of his p*ur*pos he was lette ful sone 3788

God of his manace hy*m* so sore smote
Wiþ vnvysible wounde ay vncurable
That' in his guttes carf soo and bote
That' his peynes were importable [leaf 256] 3792
And certeinly þe wrecħ was resonable
ffor many mannys guttes did he peyne
But' fro his p*ur*poos cursed and dampneable
ffor al his smerte he nolde hym restreyne 3796

But' bad anoon apparaile his Ooste
And sodeynly er he was of it' ware
God daunted al his pride and al his boost'
ffor he so sore felle out' of his chare 3800
That' hurte his ly*m*mes and his skyn to-tare
Soo þat' he ne myȝt' goo ne ride
But' in a chaier men about hy*m* bare
Al for-brused boþ bak' and side 3804

The wreth of god hy*m* smote so cruelly
That' in his body wikked wormes crepte
And þer wiþ al he stonke so horryblye
That' noon of alle his mayne þat' hy*m* kepte 3808
whedere þat' he woke or ellis sclepte
Ne myght' not' þe stynk' of hy*m* endure
In þis meschief he wailled and eke wepte.
And knewe god lorde of euery creature 3812

To alle his hooste and to hym self also
fful wlatsom was þe stink' of his careyne
No man myȝt' hym bere to ne froo.
And in his stynk' and in his horrible peyne 3816
He starfe ful wrechedly in a mounteyne
Thus haþ þis robbour and homycide
That' mony a man made to wepe and pleyne
Such guerdon as by-longeþ vnto pride 3820

[*Alexander the Great.*]

The Storie of Alisaundre is so comune. ¶ **De Alexandro Rege**
That' euery wiȝt' þat' haþ discreciou*n*
Haþ herd somwhat' or all of his fortune
This wide world as in conclusio*un* 3824
He wanne by strength or for his hie reno*un*
They weren glad for pees vnto hy*m* sende
þe pride of man and beest' he laid ado*un*
Wher so he come vnto þe worldes ende 3828

Comparison myȝt' neuere be maked.
Bytwix hym and ano*þer* conquero*ur* [leaf 256, back]
ffor al þis world for drede of hy*m* Haþ quaked.
He was of knyghthode and of fredom flour' 3832
ffortune him made þe heir' of hur' hono*ur*
Saue wyne and wo*m*men no þing' myȝt' a-swage
His hegh entente in armes and laboure
So was he ful of louying' corage 3836

What' pite were it' to hym þouȝe I ȝou tolde
Of Darius and an hundred thowsand moo.
Of kyngges Princes. and Erles bold
Which he conquered and brouȝt' into woo 3840
I say as fer as man may ride and goo.
The worlde was his what' shuld I more devise
ffor þouȝe I write and told ȝou euer moo.
Of his kinghode it' myȝt' not' suffise 3844

Twelue ȝere he regned as saiþ Machabe
Philippes sone of Macedoyne he was
That' furst' was kinge of Grece þe cuntree
O worþi gentile Alisaunder' alas 3848
That' euer shuld [thee] falle Such̄ a caas
Enpoysened of þi folk' þou were
Thine. *sise*. fortune haþ turned into an aas
And ȝit' for þe ne weppe she neu*ere* a tere 3852

Who shal ȝeue teeres men to co*m*pleyn*e*
The deep of gentilnesse and of ffraunchise
That' al þe worlde weelded in his demeyn*e*
And ȝit' him þouȝt' hit' myȝt' not' suffise 3856
So fful was his corage of high̄ emprise
Allas who shal me helpe to endite
ffals fortune and poyson to despise
The which̄ twoo of al this woo I wite 3860

[*Julius Cæsur.*]

By wisdome manhode and by labour' ¶ **Iulius Cesar**/.
ffro humblehede and fro Roial Maieste
Vp roos he Iulius þe Conquerour
That' al̄ þe Occident' by londe and See 3864
By strength̄ of honde or ellis by trete
And vnto Roome made hem t*r*ibutarie.
And Sithens of Rome þe Emp*erour* was he /
Til þat' fortune wexe his aduersarie [leaf 257] 3868

A Mighty Cesar þat' in Tessalye.
Aȝeinst' Pompius fader þine in lawe
That' of þe Orient' had al þe chyualrie
As fer as þat' þe day bygynneþ dawe 3872
Thogh̄ þou þorgh̄ þi kuyghthode haþ hem take and sclawe
Sauf fewe folk' þat' wiþ Pompius fledde
Thorghe which̄ þou puttest' al þe orient' in awe
Thonke fortune þat' so wel þe spedde 3876

But now a litel while I wil bywaile
This Pompeus þis noble gouernour
Of Roome which þat fleigh at this bataille
I saye oon of his men a fals traitour 3880
His hede of smote to wynne hym fauour
Of Iulius and hym þe hede brouȝt
Allas Pompey of the Orient conquerour
That fortune vnto such a funte brouȝt 3884

TO Rome aȝeine repeireþ Iulius.
Wiþ triumphe laureat ful high
But on a tyme Brutus Cassius
þat euere had of his astate Envie 3888
fful priuely had made Conspiracie
Aȝeinst þis Iulius in subtile wise /
And cast þe place in which he shuld dye
With boydekyns as I shal ȝou devise 3892

This Iulius to þe Capithole went
Vppon a day as he was wonte to goon
And in þe Capitole anoon hym hente
This fals Brutus and his foule foon 3896
And stiked hym wiþ boydekyns anon
Wiþ mony a wounde and þus þei lete hym lye
But neuere grunte he at no stroke but oon
Or ellis at twoo but ȝif his storie lye 3900

So manly was þis Iulius of herte
And so wel loued estately honeste
That þouȝe his dedly woundes so sore smerte
His mantel ouer his hippes cast he 3904
ffor no man shuld se his privete
And as he lay on dyinge in a traunce [leaf 257, back]
And wist verrely þat dede was he
Of honeste ȝit had he remembraunce 3908

¶ Lucane to þis storie I recomende
And to Sweton and Valerius also.
That' of His storie writeþ word *and* ende
How þat' þise grete conquerours twoo 3912
ffortune was furst' frende and siþen a foo/
No man ne trust' vpon his fauour longe
But' haue hure in a-waite euermoo
Witnes on alle þise conquerours stronge 3916

[*Cresus.*]

This riche Cresus whilom kyng' of lyde
O which̄ Cresus Cyquus sore hym dradde
ȝit' was he kauȝt' amonges al his pride
And to be brent' men to þe fure hym ladde 3920
But' suche a Reyne doune fro þe walken shadde
þat' sclouȝe þe fuyre and made hym to eskape
But' to be war ȝit' no grace he hadde
Til fortune on þe galous made hym gape 3924

Whan he askaped was he can not' stent'
ffor to bygynne a newe reyne aȝeine
He wende wele for þat' fortune hym sente
Suche happe þat' he askaped þorȝe þe reyne 3928
þat' of his foos he myȝt' not' be sclayn
And Suche a sweuen vpon a nyȝt' he mette
Of which̄ he was so proude and so fayn̄
That' in vengeance he al his hert' sette 3932

Vpon a tree he was as hym þouȝt'
Ther Iubiter hym wassh̄ boþ hals *and* Side
And Phebus eke a faire towale hym brouȝt'
To drye hym wiþ an þerfore wex his pride 3936
And to his douȝtere þat' stood hym beside
Which̄ þat' he knewe in his sentence habounde
He bad hure telle hym what' it' signyfied
And she his dremes byganne riȝt' þus expounde 3940

The tree quod she þe galous is to mene
And Iubiter bitokeneþ snowe and reyne
And Phebus wiþ his towale so clene.
Thoo bene the sone stremes forto sayn [leaf 258] 3944
Thow shalt' an honged be fadere certayn
Rayn shal þe wassh̄ and sonne shal þe drye
Thus warned she hy*m* ful plat' *and* ful playn
His dou3ter [which] þat' called was Phanye 3948

An honged was Cresus þe proude kinge
His Roial trone my3t' hy*m* not' availe
Tregedie is noon oþer maner' þinge
Ne can in synnynge cry ne bywaile 3952
But' þat' fortune alway wil assaile
wiþ vnware stroke þe regnes þat' bene proude
ffor whan men trusten hir þan wil she faile
And keuere her bri3t' face wiþ a clowde 3956

¶ **Thus endeþ þe monke his tale**

And here bygynneþ þe nonpreest' his prologe

¶ The prologe:
[*on leaf* 258]

Ho quod þe knyȝt' no more good of þis
That' ȝe han said is riȝt' ynowe ywis
And mochel more for litel heuynesse
Is riȝt' ynoughh̄ to mochel folk' I gesse [*no gap in Petworth*] 3960
[I sey for me / hit is a gret disese [**Addit. MS 5140,** *on leaf* 272 *and back*]
Wher as men haue ben / in gret welth and ese
To here of her sodeyn falle allas
And the contrarye / is Ioye and gret solas 3964
And whan a man hath̄ be / in poor estat
And clymbeth vp / and waxeth fortunat
And ther abidith̄ / in prosperite
Such̄ thyng is gladsom / as thynketh̄ me 3968
And of such̄ thyng / were goodly for to telle
ya q*uo*d our hoost / bi seynt poules belle
ye sey soth / this monk hath clappid lowd
He spak how fortune / cou*er*ed was with a clowd 3972
I nat nere what / and also tragedie
Rih̄t now ye herde / and parde no remedie
I[t i]s forto be wailyng and compleyne
ffor that that is don / and also it is a peyne 3976
As ye han seid to heer' of hevynesse
Sir monk nomore of this / so god you blesse
[You]r' tale anoyeth̄ / alle this companye
Such thyng / is nat worth / a bottirflye] [**Addit. MS 5140,** *extract stops*]
ȝoure tales done vs no sporte ne game
Wherfore sir' monke or daun pers by ȝ*our* name
I prey ȝou hertely telle vs somwhat' ellys
ffor sikerly ne were þe Clynkyng' of ȝour' bellis 3984

That on ȝoure bridel honge on euery side
By heuene kynge þat for vs alle deyde
I shuld er þis haue falle doun for sclepe
Al þough [þe] scloupe had neuer be so depe 3988
Than had ȝoure tale ben told in veyn
ffor certeynly as al þise clerkes seyñ
wher as a [man] may haue non audience
Nouȝt helpeþ it to telle his sentence 3992
And wel I woote þe substaunce is in me
ȝif eny þinge shal wel reported be
Sir say somwhat of huntyng I ȝou preie
Nay quod þis monke I haue no lust to pleie 3996
Now lat anoþer telle as I haue told
þan spak our hoost with rude speche and bold
And saide vnto þe nonnes preest anoñ
Come nere sir preest Come hider Sire Ioñ [leaf 258, back]
Telle vs suchñ þingges as may our hertis glade 4001
Be bliþ þouȝe þou ride vpon a Iade
What þouȝe þine hors be boþ foule and lene
ȝif he wil serue þe rek nat a bene 4004
Loke þat þi hert be mery euermoo.
ȝis sir quod he ȝis hoost so mote I goo
But I be mery Iwis I wil be blamed.
And Riȝt anoon his tale he haþ atamed. 4008
And þus seide to vs euerychoñ
My tale I wil bygynne anoñ [spurious]

¶ Thus endeþ þe prologe of þe nonnes preste

And here bygynneþ þe nonne p*re*est' his tale
[*on leaf* 258, *back*]

A poor wydowe somdel stope in age
was whilom dwelling' in a narowe cotage 4012
Besides a groue stonding' in a dale
This widowe of which I telle ȝou my tale
Siþens þilk day þat' she was last' a wiff
In paciens lad a ful sympul liff' 4016
ffor litel was hur' Catel and hur' rent'
By Husbondry of such as god her sent'
She fonde hure self and eke her doughtred twoo
Thre large sowes had she *and* no moo. 4020
Thre kyen and eke a shepe þat' hight' malle
fful soty was hur' boure *and* eke her halle
In whiche she ete mony a sclender mele
Of poynant' sause hir' neded neuer a dele 4024
No deynte morsel passed hur' þrote
Hir' diete was acordant' to her cote
Replecio ne made her neuer seke
Attemper diete was all her' phisike 4028
And ex*er*cise and hert' sufficiañce
The goute letted hur no þing' to daunce
Ne poplexie shent' not' her hede
Noo wyne dronke she neiþer white ne rede 4032
Her boord was serued most' wiþ white *and* blake
Milk' and broune brede in which she fond no lake
Seyned Bacon and somtyme an eye or tweye
ffor she was as It' were a mane*re* of a deye [leaf 259]
A gardyne she had enclosed al aboute 4037
Wiþ stikkes and a drie diche wiþ-oute
In which̃ she had a cok' þat' hiȝt' chauntilere
In all̃ þe londe of crowing' was his pere 4040

His mouþ was myrier þan þe mery orgoñ
On masse daies þat' in þe churche gooñ
Wel sikerer was þe crowyng' in his logge
þan is a clokke or an abbay orlogge 4044
By nature he crewe eche ascencioun
Of Equinoxial of þilk' toun
ffor whan degrees .xv. were descended.
þat' knewe he þat' it' myȝt' not' bene amended 4048
His Combe was redder þan þe fyne Curaħ
And bateled as it' were a castel waħ
Ilike azure were his legges and his toone
His bille was blake and as þe gete it' shone 4052
His nailles witter þan þe lily floure
And ylike burnysshed gold was his colour
This gentile Cok had in his gouernaunce
Vij. hennys forto doon his plesaunce 4056
Whicħ weren his sustres and his paramours
And wonder like to hym as of colours
Of þe whicħ þe fairest' hwed vnder þrote
Was clepe fair' Damysel Pertilote 4060
Curtais she was discrete and debonaire
And Companable and bere her self so faire
Siþens þilk' day þat' she was vij. nyȝt' olde
That' trewly she haþ þe hert' in hold' 4064
Of Chauntelere loukyn in euery litħ
He loued hure so þat' wel was hym þer witħ
But' sucħ a Ioie as it' was to here hem singe
Whan þat' þe briȝt' sonne gan to sprynge 4068
In swete accorde my lief is fare a londe
ffor þilk' tyme as I haue vnderstonde
Beestes and briddes coude speke *and* synge
And so byfelle þat' in þe dawynge 4072
As Chaunteeleer amonges his wyues alle
Sat' on his perchħ þat' was in þe halle [leaf 259, back]
And next' hym sat' þis faire Pertilote
This Chaunteclere gan gronen in his þrote 4076

As a man þat' is in his dreme drecched sore
And whan þat' Pertilote þus herd' hym rore
She was a-gast' and seide hert' dere
What' eileþ ȝou to grone in þis manere 4080
ȝe bene a verray sclepe*r* fy for shame
And he answerd' and saide þus madame
I prey ȝou þat' ȝe take it' not' a greef'
By god me mette þat' I was in such mescheef' 4084
Riȝt' nowe *þat'* ȝit' myn hert' is sore afriȝt'
Nowe god [quod] he my sweuen rede ariȝt'
And kepe my body out' of' foule p*r*iso*u*n
Me mette þat' I romed vp and do*u*n 4088
Wit̄h-in our yerde wher as I segh̄ a beest'
Was lik' an hounde and wold' haue made arest'
Vpon my body and wold haue had me dede
His colour was bytwix white and red 4092
And tipped was his taille and boþ his Eeres
Wiþ blak' vnlike þe remenaunt' of his heeres
His snowte smal with glowinge eyen tweye
ȝit' for his loke almost' for fere I dye. 4096
This caused me my gronyng' doutelees
A voy quod she fie on ȝou hertelees
Allas quod she for by þat' god aboue
Now han ȝe lost' myn hert' and my loue 4100
I can not' loue a coward' by my faiþe
ffor certes what' so eny wo*m*man seiþe
We alle desiren ȝif it' myȝt be
To han husbondes hardy wise *and* free 4104
And secre ne noo nygard' ne ne fooH
To hym þat' is a-gast' of euery tooH
Ne noon avouto*ur* by þat' god aboue
How durst' ȝe seyn for shame vnto ȝo*ur* loue 4108
That' eny þing' myȝt' make ȝou a-ferde
Haue ȝe no mannys hert' *and* han a berde
Allas and conne ye be a-gast' of swuenes.
No þing' god woote but' vanite in sweuen is [leaf 260] 4112

Sweuens engendren of replexions
And oft' of fume and of complexions
Whan humours bene to habundañte in a wiȝt'
Certes þis dreme whicħ ȝe han had to nyȝt' 4116
Co*mm*eþ of þe grete super*f*luite
Of ȝoure rede Colere p*ar*de
Whicħ causeþ folk to dreme her dremes
Of Arowes and fires wiþ rede lemes 4120
Of Rede beestes þat' willen he*m* bite
Of contek' and of whelpes grete and lite
Riȝt' as þe humour of Malecolie
Causeþ [ful] mony a man in sclepe to crye 4124
ffor fere of beeres and boles blake
Or ellis blake deuels wil he*m* take
Of oþer humoures couþe I telle also
That worken mony a man in slepe ful woo. 4128
But' I wil passe as liȝtly as I can
Loo Caton whicħ þat' was so wise a man
Seid he not' þus ne do no force of dremes
Now sir*e* quod she whan we flee fro the bemes. 4132
ffor goddis loue as takeþ som laxatif
Vp p*er*ile of my saule and of my liff
I counsaile ȝou þe best' I wil not lye
That' boþ of colour and of Malencolie 4136
ȝe purge ȝou and for ȝe shul not' tarie
Þouȝe þat' in þis toun*e* is no*n* Apotecarie
I shal my self to herbes techen ȝou
whicħ shal be ȝoure here *and* ȝo*ur* prowe 4140
And In þe Gardeyne two herbes shal I fynd*e*
þe whicħ han of her p*ro*prete by kynde
To purgen ȝou by-neþe and eke aboue
ffor*ȝ*eteþ not' þis for goddes awne loue 4144
ȝe bene ful Colerike of complexioñ
Where þe sonne in his assencioñ
Ne fynde ȝou replete of ȝo*ur* humo*ur*s hote
And if it' doo I dar wel lay a grote 4148

þat' ȝe shul haue a feuer terciane.
Or an ague þat' may be ȝour bane [leaf 260, back]
A day or twoo ȝe shul haue dygestyues
Of wormes er ȝe take ȝoure laxatyues 4152
Of laureal Centaure and of fumytere
Or ellis of Ellibore þat' growe þ þere
Of Catapuce and of gatys-buries
Or Erbe Ive grouyng' in oure ȝeerd þer mery es 4156
Pek hem vp riȝt' as þei growe and ete hem Inne
Be mery husbonde for ȝour' fader kynne
Dredeþ no dreme I can say ȝou no more
Madame quod he gramercy of ȝoure lore 4160
But naþelees as touching Danne Catoun
That' haþ of wisdome such grete renoun
By god men may in olde bokes rede
Oon of þe grettest' auctour out' of drede 4164
Of mony a man more of auctorite
Than euer caton was so mot' I the
That al the reuers seyn of þis sentence
Han han wel founden by experience 4168
That' dremes bene significacions
As wel of Ioie as tribulacions
That' folk enduren in þis lif present'
It' nedeþ nat' to make of þis noon argument' 4172
The verrey preef sheweþ it' in dede
Oon of þe grettest auctour out of drede
Saiþ þus þat' whilom two felawes went'
On Pilgrimage in ful good entent 4176
And happed so þei commen into a toune
Wher as þere was such congregacioun
Of puple and eke of streite herbygage
þat' þei fande not' as moche as a cotage 4180
In whiche þei boþ myght' ylogged be
Wherfore þei mosten of necessite
As for þat' nyȝt' departen of companye
And eche of hem goþ to his hostelrye 4184

And toke his logginge as it' wolde falle
That' oon of hem was logged in a stalle
ffer in a ȝeerde wiþ oxen of þe plouȝe
That' oþer man was logged wel ynouȝe [leaf 261] 4188
As was his auenture or his fortune
þat' vs gouerneþ al as in commune
And so by-felle longe er' it' were day
This man mette in his bed þer as he lay 4192
How þat' his felawe gan on hym calle
And saide Allas for in an oxes stalle
This nyȝt' shal I be murþered þer I lie
Now helpe me dere broþere er I dye / 4196
In al hast' come to me he seide
This man out' of his sclepe for fere abreide
But' whan þat' he was wakened out' of his sclepe
He turneþ hym and toke of þis no kepe 4200
Hym þouȝt' his dreme was noȝt' but' a vanyte
Thus twies in his sclepinge dremed he
And at þ^e^ .iij. tyme ȝit' his felawe
Come as he þouȝt' I am nowe Isclawe 4204
Biholde my blody woundes depe and wide
Arise vp erly in þe morowe tide
And at' the west' gate of þe toun quod he
A cart' ful of donge þer shalt' þou see 4208
In which his body is hidde ful priuely
To þilk' carte aresten boldely
My golde caused my murder soþ to sayn
And tolde hym euery poynt' how he was sclayn 4212
Wiþ a ful pitous face pale of hwe
And trest' wel his dreme he fonde ful trwe
ffor on þe morowe as sone as it' was day
To his felawes Inne he toke þe way 4216
And whan he come to þis oxes stalle
Aftere his felawe he bygan to calle
The ostelere answerd hym anon
And saide Sir' ȝoure felawe is goon 4220

As sone as day he went' out' of þe toune
This man gan falle in grete suspecio*un*
Remembryng' hym on his dremes þat' he mette
And forþ he goþ no lenger wold' he lette 4224
Vnto þe west' gate of þe toune and fo̅nde
A donge cart' as he went' to donge þe londe [leaf 261, back]
That' was araied in þe same wise
As ȝe han herde þe dede man deuyse 4228
And wiþ an hardy hert' he gan to crie
Vengeaunce and iustice on þis vilanye
My felawe murdred is þis same nyȝt'
And in þis carte he lith̄ gapinge vp riȝt' 4232
[I crye out / on the mynystres q*uod* he [Addit. MS 5140, *on leaf* 276, *back*]
That sholde the lawe keep in this Cite
Harrow allas / here lith̄ my felawe sleyn
What sholde I more / vnto this tale seyn 4236
The people out sterte / and caste the carte to grou*n*de
And in the myddis of the donge thei fou*n*de] [Addit. MS *extract ends*]
The dede man þat' murdred was alł newe
O blisful god þat' art' so Iust' and trewe 4240
Loo how þat' þou bywreiest' mordere alway
Murder wil out' þat' see wee day by day
Morder is so wlatsom and so abhomynable
To god þat' is so Iust' *and* resonable 4244
þat' he ne wil not' suffre it hilled be
Theigh̄ it' abide a ȝeer or twoo or þre
Murder wil out' þis is my conclusio*un*
And riȝt' anoon mi*ni*stres of þe to*un* 4248
Haþ hent' þe Carter and [ful] sore hy*m* pyned
And eke þe Ostilere so fer engyned
That' þei biknewe her wikkednesse anoo̅n
And weren honged by þe nek' bone 4252
Here may men see þat dremes bene to drede
And certes in the same boke I rede
Riȝt' in þe next' chapitere I rede of þis
I gabbe not' so haue I Ioie or blis 4256

Two men þat' wolden haue passed þe See
ffor certeyn cause in to a fer contre
If þat' þe wynde ne had be cont*rar*ie
That' made hem in a Cite forto tarie 4260
That' stood ful merye vpon an hauen side
But' on a daye aȝeinst' þe euentide
The wynde gan chaunge and blowe as hy*m* lust'
Iolif and glad þei wenten vnto rust' 4264
And Casten hem ful erly forto saile
But' herken how oo man felle i*n* grete perile
That' oon of hem in scleping' as he lay
Hy*m* mette a wonder dreme aȝeinst' þe day 4268
Hym þouȝt' a man stood be his beddys side
And hy*m* co*m*maunded þat' he shuld' abide. [leaf 262]
And saide hym þus if þou to morn wende
Thowe shalt' be dreynt' my tale is at' an ende 4272
He woke and tolde his felawe what' he meitt'
And preide him his viage forto lette
As for þat' day he preide hy*m* to abide
His felawe þat' lay by his beddys side 4276
Gan forto laugh and scorned ful fast'
No drem q*uo*d he may myne hert' agast'
That' I wil lette forto do my þingges
I sette not' a strawe by dremyngges 4280
ffor sweuenes bene but' vanytees *and* Iapes
Men dreme alway of owles *and* of apes
And of mony a mase þer-wiþal
Men dremen of þinge þat' neue*re* [shal] 4284
But' siþen I see þou wit' here abide
And þus forsclewþen wilfully þi tyde
God wote it' rewe þ me and haue good day
And þus he toke his leue and went' his way 4288
And er that' he had half his cours assailed
I not' whi ne what' meschaunce it' ailed
But' casuely þe shippes botme rent'
And ship and man vnder þe water went' 4292

In siȝt' of oþer shippes hy*m* beside
That' wiþ hym sailled att þe same tyde
And þerfore he seide P*er*telote so dere
By suche ensamples olde maist' þou lere 4296
That' no man shulde be to rechelees
Of Dremes for I say þe doutelees
That' in mony a dreme ful sore is forto drede
Lo in þe lif of seint' kenelyne I rede 4300
That' was kenulphus sone þe noble kynge
Of Mertenrike how kenelyne mette a þinge
A litel er [he] was murde[re]d on a day
His murdre in his Auysioñ he say 4304
His norice him expowned euery deꝗ
His sweuen and bad hym for to kepe hy*m* weꝗ
ffor treson but' he was seuen ȝere olde
And þerfore litel tale haþ he tolde [leaf 262, back] 4308
Of eny dreme so holly was his h*er*te
Be god I had leuer þan my sherte
That' ȝe had herd' his legende as haue I
Dame P*er*telote I say ȝou trewly 4312
Macrobyus þat' writ' þe avisioñ
In affrike of þe worþi Ciprioñ
Affermeþ dremes and seþ þat' þ*er* bene
Warnynge of þingges þat' men after sene 4316
And ferþermore I pray ȝou lokeþ weꝗ
The olde testament' of Danyeꝗ
ȝif he heelde dremes of eny vanyte
Rede eke of Iosepꝫ and ye shal See 4320
Wheder dremes be somtyme I say not alle
Warnyng' of þingges þat' shul after' falle
Loke eke of Egipte þe kinge danne Pharao
His bakere and his botelere also 4324
Wher þei ne felt' noon effecte in dremes
Who so wil seche of sundry rewmes
May reden of dremes mony a wonder' þinge
Loo Cresus whiꝫ þat' was of lyde þe kynge 4328

Mette he not' þat' he satte vpon a tre
Which signified he shuld' anhonged be
Lo here Adromacha Ectors wiff
That' day þat' Ector shuld lete his lif 4332
She dremed on þe same nyȝt' byforn
How þat' þe lif of Ector shuld be lorn
ȝiff þilk' day he went' into bataile
She warned hym but' it' myȝt' not' availe 4336
He went' forto fiȝten naþelees
But' he was sclayn of Achilles
But' thilk' tale is alto longe to telle
And eke it' is nygh day I may not dwelle 4340
Shortly I say as for conclusion
That I shal haue of þis avision
Of aduersitees *and* I say ferþ*er*more
That I ne wil telle of laxatifs no store 4344
ffor þei bene venemous I wote riȝt' well
I hem diffie I loue hem neu*ere* a dele [leaf 263]
NO lat' vs speke of merþe and stent' al þis
Madame p*er*tilote so haue I blisse 4348
Of oo þing' god haþ sent' me large grace
ffor whan I se þe bewte of ȝoure face
ȝe bene so scarlet' rede aboute þe eyen
It' makeþ al my drede for to dyen 4352
ffor also siker' as in principio.
Mulier est hominis confusio
Madame þe sentence of þis latyn is
Wo*m*man is mannys ioy and his blisse 4356
ffor whan I fele on nyȝt' ȝour' soft' side
Al be it' þat' I may not' on ȝou ride
ffor þat' oure perche is made so narowe alas
I am so ful of Ioye and solas 4360
þat' I defie boþ sweuen and dreme
And wiþ þat' word I fleegh doune fro þe beme
ffor it' was day and eke his hennes alle
And wiþ a chukke he gan hem forto calle 4364

ffor he had founden a corn lay in þe ȝerde
Real he was no more afferd
He ffeþered Pertelot xx^ti tyme
And drad as oft er it were prime 4368
He lokeþ as it were a grym lyoun
And on his toes he roomed vp and doun
Hym deyned not to sette his fete on grounde
Ay chokked he whan he had a corne found 4372
And to hym þan ronne his wyues all
Thus Royal as a prince in his hall
Leue I þis chauntelere in his pasture
And aftere wil I telle of his auenture 4376
Whan þe month þe which þe world byganne
That hiȝt marche whan god first made man
Was Complete and passed were also
Siþens Marche bygan .xxx^ti daies *and* twoo. 4380
Byfelle þat chauntelere in his pride
His seuen wyues welken hym byside ·
Cast vp his eyen to þe briȝt sonne
That in þe signe of Taurus was ronne [leaf 263, back] 4384
Twenty degrees and oon and somwhat more
He knew by kynde and by noon oþer lore
That it was prime he crewe wiþ blisful steuen
The sonne he saide is clumben vp to heuen 4388
xl. degres and oon and more ywis
Madame Pertelote my worldes blisse
Herken how þise blisful briddes singe
And se þe fresshe floures how þei springe 4392
fful is myn hert of Reuel and of solas
But sodeynly hym felle a soriful caas
ffor euer þe latter and of Ioie is sone ygoo
And comonly ofte tyme it falleþ soo 4396
And if arthour coude faire endite
He in cronicle myght Sauely write
As for a souereyn notabilite
Nowe euery wise man herken me 4400

This story is as trewe I vndertake
As is þe booke of launcelote de lake
That' women holde in ful gret reuerence
Now wil I turne a3ein to my sentence 4404
A Col foxe [ful] of scleiȝt' and iniquite
That' in þe groue had wonned ȝeeres þre
By high̃ ymagynacioñ to-fore cast'
þe same nyght' þorgh̃-out' þe hegges brast' 4408
Into þe ȝeerd' þer chauntelere þe faire
was wonte and eke his wyues to repaire
And in a bedde of wortes stille he lay
Till it' was passed vndren of þe day 4412
Waitynge his tyme on chaunteler to falle
As gladly done þise homycydes alle
That' in a-waite ligge to murdre men ·
O fals murdere rowkyng' in þi den 4416
O newe Scariot' o . newe Genyloñ
ffals dissimylour o greke Sym̃on
þat' brou3test' troye al vtterly to sorowe
O chauntelere acursed be þat' morowe 4420
þat' þou into [þi] ȝeerd' flegh̃ from þe bemes
Thow were ful wel ywarned by þi dremes [leaf 264]
That' ilke day was perilous to þe
But' þat' .þat' god a-fore wote most' nedes be 4424
Aftere þe opynyon of certeyn clerkes
Wittnesse of hym þat' eny clerk es
That' in scole [is] grete altercacioñ
In þis mater and grete disputacioñ 4428
And haþ bene of an C. thousand men /
But' I ne can[not] bult' it to þe brenne
As can þe holy doctour augustyne
Or boys or þe Bisshop Bradwardyne 4432
Whedere þat' goddys wille a-fore wetyng'
Streyneþ me nedely forto doon a þing'
Nedely clepe I symple necessite
Or ellis ȝif þe free chois be graunted me 4436

To do þat' same þing' or do it' nouȝt' ·
Thouȝe god forwote it' er it' was wrouȝt'
Er of his wetyng' streyneþ neuer a dele
But by necessite condicionele 4440
I wil not' haue to done of such matere
My tale is of a cokke as ȝe shullen here
That' toke his counsaile of his wif with sorowe
To walken in þe ȝeerde vpon þe morowe 4444
That' he had mette þe dreme þat' I ȝou tolde
Womm[an]es counsaile is ful ofte colde
Wo*m*m[an]es counsaile brouȝt' vs first' to woo
And made Adam from paradys to goo . 4448
Ther he was ful mery an wel at ese
But for I note whom I myȝt displese
If I counsaile of wo*m*men wold blame
Passe ouere for I seide it' in my game 4452
Rede awters wher þei trete of such matere
And what' þei seyne of wo*m*men here
Thise bene þe cokkes wordes and not myne
I can no harme of no wo*m*man devyne 4456
ffaire in þe sonde to bath hur merely
lith *per*telote and al hur*e* susters bye
Aȝeinst' þe sonne and chauntelere so fre
Songe meryer þan þe meermaiden in þe See [leaf 264, back]
ffor phisialogus saiþ witterly 4461
How þat' þei syngen wel and merely
And so byfelle as he cast' his ye
Amonges þe wortes vppon a botterflie 4464
He was war of this fox þat' lay ful lowe
No þinge ne lust' hy*m* þan for to crowe
But' cries anon cok' cok' and vp he sterte
As a man þat' was affraied in his herte 4468
ffor naturelly a beest' desireþ to flee
ffro his contrarie if he may it See
Þouȝe he neuer had seye it' erst w*ith* his ye
This chauntelere whan he hy*m* gan aspie 4472

He wold haue fledde but þat þe fox anoñ
Saide gentile sir allas what hast þou doñ
Bene ȝe affraied of me þat am ȝoure frende
Certes sir þan ben ȝe vnhende 4476
If I to ȝou wil harme or vilanye
I am not come ȝour counsaile to aspie
But trewly þe cause of my comynge
was oonly to harken how þat ȝe singe 4480
ffor trewly ȝe han as mery a steuen
As aungel haþ þat is in heuen
Ther-witħ ȝe han in musike more felinge
þan had boys or eny þat can synge 4484
My lorde ȝour fadere god his saule blisse
And eke ȝoure modere and hur gentilnesse
Han in myn hous bene to ȝou grete ese
And Certes sir riȝt fain wold I ȝou plese 4488
But for men speken of syngynge I wil seye
So mot I brouke myn eien tweye
Sauf ȝe I ne herd neuer man so synge
As did ȝoure fader in þe mornynge 4492
Certes it was of hert al *þat* he songe
And forto make his vois þe more stronge
He wold so peyn hym þat wiþ both his yen
He most wynke so loude he did crien 4496
And stonden on his typtoon þerwiþal·
And strecche forþ his nek longe *and* smalł [leaf 265]
And eke he was of suchħ discrecioñ
That þer nas no man in no regioñ 4500
That him in songe or wisdom myȝt passe
I haue wel red daun Burnel þer as
Amonge his vers þer was a cok
[That] ffor a preestes sone ȝaue hy*m* a knok 4504
Vpon his legge whiles he was ȝonge *and* nyce
He made hym forto lese his benefice
But certeyn þer nys noon comparisoñ
Bytwix þe wisdom and discrecioñ 4508

Of ȝoure fadere and of his subtilite
Now syngeþ sir' for seint' charite
Lat' see conne ȝe ȝoure fadere countrefete
This Chauntelere his wenges gan to bete 4512
As man þat' coude nat' his tresoñ aspie
So was he rauessed wiþ his flaterye
Allas ȝe lordes mony a fals flatour
Is in ȝour court' and mony a losengour' 4516
That' plesen ȝou more by my feiþ
That' he þat' soþfastnesse vnto ȝou seiþ.
Redeþ Ecclesiastre of flaterye
Beþ ware ȝe lordes of her trecherye 4520
This Chaunteclere stood high vpon his toos
Strecchinge his nek and held his eien cloos
And gan to crowe loude for þe nones
And daun Russel stert' vp al at' ones 4524
And by þe Gargaige hent' Chaunteclere
And on his bak toward' the wood hy*m* bere
ffor ȝit' was ther no man hy*m* swed
O Destany þat' maist' not' bene eschewed' 4528
Allas þat' chaunteclere fel fro þe bemes
Allas his wif ne rouȝt' not' of dremes
And on a friday felle all þis meschãunce
O Venus þat' art' goddes of plesaunce 4532
Siþens þat' þi *seruaun*te was þis chaunteclere
And in þi *ser*uise did al his powere
More for delit' þan þe world' to multiplie
Whi woldest' þou suffre on þi day to dye [leaf 265, back]
O Gaufrede dere maistere souereyñ 4537
Þat' whan þe worþi kinge Richard' was sclayñ
Wiþ shot' compleyndest' his deþ so sore
Whi ne had I nowe þi sentence *and* þi lore 4540
Þe ffriday forto chide as did ȝe
ffor on a friday shortely sclayne was he
Þan wolde I shewe howe þat' I coude playne
ffor chaunteclere and for his peyne 4544

Certus such̄ crye ne lamentacioñ
was of ladies made whan þat' Ilyon
Was wonne. and pirrus *with* his streiȝt' swerd'
Whan he hent' king' Prian by þe beerd' 4548
And sclayn hym as seide Enneidos
As maden all þe hennes *in* þe cloos
Whan þei had seie of chaunteclere þe siȝt'
But' souereyn dame *per*telote shriȝt' 4552
wel lodder þan did Hasdrubaldes wif'
whan þat' her husbonde had lost' his lif'
And þat' þe romaynes had brent' Cartage
She was so ful of torment' *and* of Rage 4556
That' wilfully into þe fire she stert'
And brent' her self wiþ a stedfast' hert'
O wooful hennys riȝt' so *cri*den ȝe
As whan þat' Nero brent' þe Cite 4560
Of Rome criden þe Cenato*urs* wyues
ffor þat' her husbondes shulden lese her lyues
wiþ-outen Gilt' [þis] Nero haþ hem sclayn
Now wil I turne to my tale aȝein 4564
This sely widowe and hur*e* douȝters two
Herden þe hennys crien and make woo
And out' atte door sterten þei anoon
And segh þe fox toward' þe grouo goon 4568
And bare on his bak þe Cok away
They criden out' and harawe *and* welaway
A ha þe fox and after' hy*m* þei ran
And eke wiþ staues mony an o*þer* man 4572
Ran Coll̄ our dogge. talbot *and* Garlonde
And Malkyn wiþ her dystaf in hur*e* honde [leaf 266]
Ran cowe and calf and eke the verrey hogges
Sore afferd' for berking' of dogges 4576
And shetinge of men and wo*m*men eke
þei ronne so þeire hert*es* þei þouȝt' to breke
þei ȝelden as feendes doñ in helle
The dogges criden as men wold' hem quelle 4580

Out' of the hyues come þe swarme of bees
The gees for fere flowen in þe trees
So hidous was the noise .O *benedicite*
Certes he Iak' strawe and his mayne 4584
Ne made neuer showtes half so shrill*e*
whan þat' þei wold*e* eny flem*m*yng kill*e*
As þat' ilk' day was made vpon þe fox
Of bras þei brouȝt' bemes and of box 4588
Of horn and boon in which̄ þei pouped
And þerwiþal þei schrited and showted.
It semed as þat' heuene shuld*e* fall*e*
Now good I prey ȝou harkeneþ all*e* 4592
Lo how fortune turneþ sodeynly
The hope and eke p*r*ide of her envie
This cok/ þat' lay vppon the fox bak'
In al his drede vnto þe fox spak' 4596
And saide Sir*e* if I were as ȝe
ȝit' shuld I say as wis god helpe me
Turne aȝeine ȝe proude cherles all*e*
A verrey pestilence vppon ȝou fall*e* 4600
Nowe am I come vnto þis wodys side
Maugre ȝour*e* hede þe cok shal here abide
I wol hym ete in feiþ and þat' anoñ
The fox answerde in faiþ it' shal be doñ 4604
And [as] he spak' þ*a*t worde al sodeynly
This Cok' brak from his mouþ delyuerly
And high̄ vppon a tree he flegh̄ anoñ
And whan þe fox segh̄ þat' he was goñ 4608
Allas quod he O chauntelere allas
I haue quod he done to ȝou trespas
In as moch̄ as I made ȝou aferd'
Whan I ȝou hent' and brouȝt' out' of þe ȝerde [leaf 266, back]
But' sire I did it' not' in no wicked entent' 4613
Commeþ doune and I shal telle ȝou what' I ment'
I shal saie soþ god helpe me soo
Nay þan quod he I schrewe vs boþ twoo 4616

And first' I schrewe my self boþ blood and bones
ȝif þou bigile me ofter þan ones
Thow shalt' no more wiþ þi flaterie
Do me swynk' and wink' wiþ myn ye 4620
ffor he þat' wynket' whan he shuld see
As wisly god lat' hym neuer þee
Nay quod þe fox god ȝeue hy*m* meschaunce
That' is so vndiscrete of gouerna*u*nce 4624
That' Iangeleþ whan he shuld haue pees
Loo such is forto be rechelees
And necligent' and trusteþ on flaterie
But' ȝe þat' holden þis foly 4628
As of a Cok' of a fox and of an henne
Takeþ þe Moralite good men·
ffor seint' poule seiþ al þat' writen is
To our doctrine it' is writen ywis / 4632
Takeþ þe fruyte and lat' þe chaf be stille
Nowe good god if it' be þi wille
As seiþ my lorde so make vs all good men
And bringe vs al to his blisse Amen. 4636

Thus endeþ þe preestes tale

GROUP H. FRAGMENT IX.

§ 1. THE MANCIPLE'S HEAD-LINK.

PETWORTH MS.

And þus [*on leaf* 236, *back*]
bygynnes þe manciples tale.

WEte ȝe not' where stont' a litel toune ¶ **The prologe/**
Which̄ þat' is cleped bob vp and doune
Vnder þe blee in Caunterbery waye
Ther gan our hooste to Iape and playe 4
And saide Sirres donne is in þe myre
Is þer no man for preiere ne for hyre
That' wil awake our felawe behinde
A theef myȝt' hym robbe and bynde 8
Se howe he nappeþ for goddys bones.
Awaite he wil falle from his hors at' ones
This is a coke of londoñ wiþ meschaunce
Do hym come forþ he knoweþ his pen*aun*ce [leaf 267] 12
ffor he shal telle a tale be my fay
Al þouȝe it' be nat' worth̄ a botel of hay
Awake þou coke god ȝeue þe Sorowe
What' aileþ þe to slepe so by þe morowe 16
Hast' þou had fleen to nyȝt' or þou art' dronke
Or hast' þou al nyȝt' wiþ som quene yswonke
So þat' þou maist' not' holde vp þine hede
This Coke þat' was [ful] pale and no þing' rede 20
Saide to oure hooste so god me blesse
As þer is holden on me such̄ heuynesse
That I not' wheder me were leuer sclepe
Than þe best' Galon wyne in chepe 24

wel quod þe manciple it' wil done ese 25
To þe Sir' Coke and to no wiȝt' mysplese
whiche þat' riden in þis company
þat' soo our hoost' wil of his curtesy 28
I wil as nowe excuse þe of þi tale
ffor in good fay þi visage is riȝt' pale
þine eyen dasen as me þenkeþ
And wel I woot' þi breth̄ sore stynkeþ 32
That' shewe þ þou nart not' wel disposed.
Of me certaine þou shalt' not' bene glosed.
See howe he goleth þis dronken̄ wiȝt'
As þowe he wolde swounc anoñ riȝt' 36
Hold cloos þi mouþe man by þi fader kyn
The deuel of helle sette his foote *per*In.
Thy cursed breeth̄ wil affecte vs alle
ffy stynkinge hogge foule mot' þe byfalle 40
Now takeþ hede sirs of þis lusty man
Now swete sir wil ye Iust' at' þe fan
Therto me þenkeþ ȝe be wel yshape
¶ I trowe ȝe han dronken wyne grape 44
And *þat* is whan men pley w*ith* a strawe
And wiþ þis speche þe coke wex al wrawe
[And on the Mauncipie. gan to nodde fast' [MS Reg. 17 D 15, *leaf* 235]
ffor lak' of' speche. and downe the hors hym cast' 48
Where as he lay til that' men hym vptoke
This was a faire cheuache. of' a cooke
Allas that' he nad. hold' hym bi his ladiH
And or that' he ageyn. were in his sadiH] 52
Ther was grete schovuyng' to *and* froo
To lift' hy*m* up and mykel care *and* woo
So vnweldy was þis appalled goost'
And to þe manciple þan speke our hoost' [leaf 267, back] 56
By cause drink' haþ Dominacioñ
Vppon þis man by my sauacioñ
I trowe he wolde lewdely telle his tale
ffor were it' wyne or ellis moyst' ale 60

That' he haþ dronken he spekeþ i*n* his nose 61
And galpeþ fast' and eke he haþ þe pose
He haþ also to doo more þan ynogh̄
To kepe hym and his capel out' of þ^e^ sclouȝgh̄ 64
And if he falle fro his capel eft' sone
Than shal we alle haue ynogh̄ to done
In liftinge vp of his heuy corps
Telle on þi tale of hy*m* make I no force 68
But' nowe Mauniciple i*n* feiþ þou art' to nyce
Thus openly to repreue hy*m* of his vice
Anoþer day he wil p*er*auenture
Recleyme þe and bringe þe to lure 72
I mene he speke wold of smale þingg*es*
As forto pynchen at' þi rekenyngg*es*
That' were not' honest' ȝif it come to preef'
Nowe q*uo*d the mauniciple þat' were a gret' mescheef 76
So myȝt' he bringe me in þe snare
ȝit' had I leuer paien for þe mare
Whic̄h he rit' vpon þan he shuld' w*ith* me strive
I wil not' wreþ hy*m* as mot' I þrive 80
what' þat' I spak I saide it' i*n* my bourde
And wote ȝe what' I haue here i*n* a gourde
A drauȝt' of wyne ȝe of a ripe grape
And riȝt' anoon ȝe shul se a good Iape 84
This Coke shal drynk' þ*er*of ȝif þat I may
Vp peyne of deþ he wil nat' say me nay
And certeynly to tellen as it was
Of þis vessel þe Coke dronk' fast' alas 88
What' nedeþ hit' he dronk' ynouȝe to-forn
And whan he had poped i*n* his horn
To þe Manciple he toke þe gourde ageyn
And of þat' drinke þe Coke was wonder feyn̄ 92
And þonked hy*m* in such̄ wise as he coude
Than gan oure hoost' to laughen wonder*e* loude [leaf 268]
And saide I see wel it' is necessarie
Where þat' we goon good drink' wiþ vs to carie 96

ffor þat wil turne rancour and dissese 97
To pees and loue and mony a wronge to sese
O Bachus blessed be þi name
That so can turne ernest into game 100
Worship and ponk be vnto þe
ffor of þis matere ȝe gete no more of me
Telle on þou manciple I þe pray
Wel sir quod he now herkeneþ what I say 104

¶ **Thus endeþ þe prologe of þe Manciple**

¶ The Tale .¶.

And here bygynneþ þe manciple his tale [*on leaf* 268]

WHan Phebus dwelt here in þis erþe adoun 105
As olde bokes maken mencioun
He was þe most lusty bachilere
Of al þis world and eke þe best archere 108
He sclough Phiton þe serpent as he lay
Scleping azeinst þe sonne vpon a day
And mony a noþer worþi noble dede
He wiþ his bowe wrouzt as men may rede 112
Pleien he coude on euery mynstralcie
And syngen þat it was a melodye
To harken of his cleere voys þe soun
Certes þe kynge of Thebes Amphioun 116
That wiþ hys syngging walled þat cite
Coude neuere synge half so wel as he
Therto he was þe semeliest man
That is or was siþ þe world bygan. 120
What nedeþ it is fetures to discrive
ffor in þis world was noon so faire alyue
He was þer-with fulfilled of gentilnesse
Of honure and of parfit worþinesse 124
This Phebus þat was flour of bachelerie
As wel in fredom as in Chiualrie
ffor disport and in signe eke of victorie
Of Pheton so as telleþ vs þe storie 128
was wont to beren in his honde a bowe
Now haþ þis Phebus in his hows a crowe [leaf 268]
Which in a Cage he fostred mony a day
And tauzt it to speke as men doon a Iaye 132

White was þis crowe as is a white swan 133
And countrefeted þe speche of euery man
He cowde whan he shuld' telle a tale
Ther-wiþ in al þis londe *þer* nys no ny3tyngale 136
That' cowde by an hundred thousan dele
Synge so mery and eke so wel
Now had þis phebus in his hous a wif
Whicħ þat' he loued more þan his owne lif' 140
And nyght' and day did euer diligence
Her for to plese and done reuerence
Sauf oonly 3if I þe soþ shal sayn
Ialous he was and wold haue kept' hur*e* fayñ 144
ffor hym were loþe Iiaped forto be
And so euery man wold' in sucħ degre
But' al for nau3t' for it' availeþ no3t'
A good wif þat' is clene of werk *and* þo3t' 148
Shuld not be kepte in noon awaite certeyñ
And trewly þe labour' is i*n* veyñ
To kepe a schrewe for it' wil not' be
This hold I for a verrey nycete 152
To spille labour forto kepe wyues
Thus writen olde clerkes in her lyues
But' nowe to p*ur*pos as I first' bygan·
This worþi phebus dooþ al þat' he can/ 156
To plesen hur*e* wenyng' by sucħ plesaunce
And for his manhode and his gou*ern*a*un*ce
That' no man shuld haue put' hy*m* from hir' *gra*ce
But' god it' wote þer may no man enbrace 160
As to destroie a þinge whicħ *þat'* nature
Haþ naturelly sette i*n* a creature
Take eny bridde and put' it' in a cage
And doo al þine entent' and þi corage 164
To fostere it' tenderly wiþ mete *and* drink'
Of alle deyntise *þat'* þou canst' by-þenk'
And kepe it' also clenly as he may
Al þou3e his Cage of gold be neuer so gay [leaf 269] 168

ȝit' haþ þis brid by twenty þousand fold' 169
Leuer in a forest' þat' is wilde and cold'
Goon ete wormes and suche wrecchednesse
ffor euer þis bridde wol doon his bysynes 172
To escape out' of his cage if he may
His liberte þe bridde desireþ ay
Lat' take a cat' and fostre hym wel with mylk'
And tendere flesshe and make his couche of silk' 176
And lat' hym seen a mous goo by þe wall'
And anoon he wayueth mylk' flessh and all'
And euery deynte þat' is in þe hous
Suche appetit' haþ he to ete a mous 180
Lo here haþ lust' his domynaciōn
And appetit' flemeþ discreciōn
As þe wolf haþ also a vileyns kynde
The lewdest' wolf þat' she may fynde 184
Or leest' of reputacioñ þat' wil she take
In tyme whan hur lust' to haue a make
Alle þise ensamples speke I. by þise men
That' bene vntrewe and no þing' by wommen 188
ffor men han euer a likerous appetit'
On lower þing' to performe her delite
Than on her wyues bene þei neuere so faire
Ne neuere so trewe ne so debonaire 192
ffllesshe is so newefongel wiþ meschaunce
That' we ne konne no þinge han plesaunce
That' sowneþ in vertue eny while
This Phebus which þat' þouȝt' vpon no gile 196
Deceyued was for al his Iolite
ffor vnder hym anoþer had she
A man of litel reputaciōn
Not' worþ to phebus in comparisoñ 200
The more harme is it' happeþ oft' soo
Of whoch̄ þer commeth mochel harme *and* woo
And so byfelle whan phebus was absent'
His wif anoon haþ for her lemman sent' 204

Here lemman certes þis is a knauyssh speche 205
ffor3eueþ it' me and þat' I 3ou biseche [leaf 269, back]
The wise Plato seiþ as 3e may [1] rede [[1] *first* here rede]
þe Word' mot' nedes accorde wiþ þe dede 208
3if men shal telle proprely a þinge
The worde mot' Cosyn be to þe workinge
I am a boistous man ri3t' þus say I
Ther nys no difference trewly 212
Bitwix a wif þat' is of hie degre
3if of her body dishonest' she be
And a poor wenche oþer þan þis
3if it' so be þei wirk boþ amys 216
But' *þat'* þe gentile is in state aboue
She shal be cleped his lady as in loue
And for *þat'* oþer is a poor woman
She shal be cleped his wench *and* his lemman. 220
And god it' woote myn owne der broþer
Men sayn þat' oon lith as lowe as doþ *þat'* oþer
Ri3t' so bitwix a titles tyraunt'
And an houlaw [2] and a þeef erraunt' [[2] *or* honlaw] 224
The same I say þer nys no difference
To Alisaunder was tolde þat' sentence
That' for þe tyraunt' is of grete*re* my3t'
By force of mayne for selen doun ri3t' 228
And brennen hous and home and make al playn
Lo *þer*fore is cleped a Capitayn
And for þe outlaw haþ but' smal mayne
And may not doon so grete an harme as he 232
Ne bringe a contre to so grete meschief'
Men clepen hym an outlay or a þeef'
But' for I am a man not' text' wel
I wil not' telle of Titus neuer a dele 236
I wil go to my tale as I byganne
Whan phebus [wif] had sent' for her lemman
Anoon þei wrou3ten al her lust' volage
This white crowe *þat'* henge ay in þe cage 240

Bihelde her werk' and saide neuer a word' 241
And whan þat' home was come Phebus þe lord'
þis crowe songe Cokkow. cokkow. Cukkowe
What' brid quod phebus what' songe singest' thowe [leaf 270]
Ne were þou wonte so merely to synge
That' to myn hert' it' was a reioysinge
To here þi vois allas what' songe is þis
By god quod he I synge nat' a mys 248
Phebus quod he for al þi worþinesse
ffor al þi bewte and þi gentilnesse
ffor al þi songe and al þi mynstralcye
ffor al þi waytinge blered is þine ye 252
Wiþ oon of litel reputaciōn
Nouȝt' worþ to þe as in comparisoñ
The mountaunce of a gnatte so mote I thryue
ffor on þi bed þi wiff' I segh̄ hy*m* swyve 256
What' wil ȝe more þe crawe anoon hy*m* tolde
By sad tokens and by wordes bolde
How þat' his wif' had doon her leccherie
Hym to grete shame and to gret' vilenye 260
And tolde hym oft' he segh̄ it' wiþ his eyen
This Phebus gan awaiward' forto wryen./
Hym þouȝt' his sorowful hert' brast' atwoo
His bowe he bent' and sette þer-Inne a floe 264
And in his Ire haþ he his wif sclayñ
This is þeffecte þer nys no more to sayñ
ffor sorowe of which̄ he brak' his mynstralcie
Boþ harpe and lute. gitern · and sawtrie 268
And eke he brak' his harowes *and* his bowe
And after þat' þus speke he to þe crowe
Traitour quod he wiþ tunge of scorpioñ
Thou hast/ me brouȝt' to my *con*fusioñ 272
Allas þat' I was wrouȝt' why ner I dede
O dere wiff o. gemme of lustihede
þat' were to me so sad and eke so trewe
Now liest' þou dede wiþ face pale of hwe 276

fful giltles þat durst' I swere ywis 277
O Rakel hounde to doon so foule amys
O trouble witte .o. yre rechelees
That' vnavised smytest' giltlees 280
O wan-trest' ful of fals suspeciõn
Wher was þi witt' and þi discrecioñ [leaf 270, back]
O euery man be war of rechelesnesse
Ne trow no þinge wiþ-out' strong' witnesse 284
Smyte not' to sone er þow wit' why
And be avised wel and soberly
Er ȝe doon eny executiõn
Vppon ȝoure Ire for suspeciõn · 288
Allas an Mł. folk' han rakel yre
ffully fordoon or brouȝt' he*m* in þe myre
Allas for sorowe I wil my self sele
And to þe Crawe o· fals þeef saide he 292
I wil þe qwite anoon þi fals tale
Thow songe whilom like a nyȝtyngale
Now shalt' þou fals þeef þi songe forgone
Eke þi white fetheres euerechone 296
Ne neuer in al þi lif shalt' þou speke
Thus shal men on a traitour ben ywreke
Thowe and þine ospringe euer shul be blake
Ne neuer swete noys shul ȝe make 300
But' euer crie aȝeinst' tempest' *and* reyne
In tokenynge þat' þorgh̃ þe my wif is seleyn
And to þe crowe he stert' and þat' anone
And pulled his white feþeres eu*e*rechone 304
And made hym blak' and raft hy*m* al his songe
And eke his speche and out' atte dore hy*m* sclonge
Vnto þe deuel to whoom I hy*m* bitake
And for þis caus bene al[le] crowes blake 308
Lordyngges by þis ensample I ȝou preie
¶ Beþ war and takeþ kepe what' þat' ȝe seie
Ne telleþ neuer no man ȝoure liff'
How þat' anoþer man haþ diȝt' þi wiff 312

He wil ȝou hate mortelly certayn 313
Dann salomon as wise clerkes sayn
Techeþ a man to kepe his tunge wel
But' as I seide I am not' text' wel 316
But' naþelees þus tauȝt' me my dame
My sone þenk' on þe crowe a goddys name
My sone kepe wel þi tunge and kepe þi frende
A wicked tunge is wors þan a feende [leaf 271] 320
My sone from a feende men may hem blisse
My sone god of hise endelees goodnesse
Walled a tunge wiþ teeþ and lippes eke
ffor man shuld hym avise what' he speke 324
My sone ful oft' for to mochel speche
Haþ mony a man be spilt' as clerkes teche
But' for litel speche avisely
Is no man shent' to speke generally 328
My sone þi tunge shuldest' þou restreyn̄
Att' al tyme but' whan þou dost' þi peyn
To speke of god in honure *and* preiere
The furst' vertue sone ȝif *þou* wilt' lere 332
Is to restreyne and kepe wel þi tonge
Thus lernen children whan þei bene ȝonge
My sone of moche speking' euel avised
Ther lasse speking' had ynow suffised 336
Comeþ moche harme þus was me told' *and* tauȝt'
In mochel speche synne wanteþ nauȝt'
Woost' þou wherof a Rakel tunge *ser*ueþ
Riȝt' as a swerd' forkutteþ and for-keruetl̄ 340
An arme a twoo my dere sone riȝt' soo
A tonge kitteþ fre*n*dship al a twoo
A Ianglere is to god abhomynable
Rede Salomon so wise and honurable 344
Rede Dauid and his Psalmes. rede Senek'
My sone speke not' but' w*ith* þi hede *þ*ou bek'
Dissimule as þou were deef if *þat'* *þ*ou here
A Iangelere speke of parilous matere 348

þe fflemyng' seiþ and lerne it' ȝif þe list' 349
That' litel Iangelinge causeþ mochl ryst
My sone ȝif þou no wikked word hast' seide
The ther not' drede forto be bywreiede 352
But' he þat' haþ myssaide I dar wel sayñ
He may by no way clepe his word agayñ
þing' þat' is saide. is saide *and* forþ it' goþ
þouȝe hy*m* repent' or be he neuer so looþ 356
He is his þral to whom þat' he haþ saide
A taile of which̄ he is nowe euel a-payde [leaf 271, back]
My sone be war and be not' auto*ur* newe
Of tydingges whedere þei be fals or trewe 360
Where so þou come amonges hie or lowe
Kepe wel þi tunge and þenk' vpon þe crowe 362
¶ **þus endeþ þe prologe of þe manciple.**

GROUP I. FRAGMENT X.

§ 1. THE BLANK-PARSON LINK.

[*This is really a link between some unwritten Tale and the Parson's. It has been made into the Manciple-Parson Link (or Yeoman-Parson by the Christ-Church MS) by Chaucer's copiers, though not meant for it.*]

PETWORTH MS.

And here bygynneþ þe prologe of þe p*er*sone [*on lf* 271, *bk*]

BY þat' þe manciple had his tale ended 1
þe sonne fro þe southñ is descended.
So lowe þat' he was nauȝt' to my siȝt'
Degrees *nyne and twenti*[1] as of hight' [[1] *MS* xxix] 4
Ten of þe clok it' was so as I gesse
ffor xj foote or litel more or lesse
My shadowe was at' þilk*e* tyme as þer
Of suche fete as my length*e* parted were 8
In sex foote equal of p*ro*porcioñ
þer-wiþ þe moones exaltacioñ
I mene libra alway gan ascende
As we were entringe at' a throppes ende 12
ffor wiþ our hoost' as he was wont' to gye
As in þis caas our Ioly companye
Saide in þis wise lordyngs euerechoñ
Now lakkeþ vs no tale more þat' oon 16
ffulfilled is my sentence *and* my degre
Who wil nowe telle a tale lat' see
Almost' fulfilled is myn ordyn*au*nce
I prei to god so ȝeue hym riȝt' good ch*au*nce 20
That' telleþ þis tale to vs lustely
Sir' preest' quod he art' þou a vikarie
Or art' thou a p*er*sone sei þe soþ by þi feye
Be what' þou be ne breke nat' our pleye 24

ffor euery man sauf þou haþ told his tale 25
Vnbocle and schewe what is in þi male
ffor trewly me þenkeþ by þi chere
Thow shuldest knet vp wel a grete matere 28
Telle vs a fable anoon for Cokk*es* bonys
This p*er*son answerd al at onys
þow getest fable noon ytold for me
ffor Poule þat writeþ vnto Timothe· [leaf 272] 32
Repreuen hem þat waiven soþfastnesse
And tellen fables and such wrechednesse
Whi shuld I shewen draf out of my fest
Whan I may shewe whete if þat me lest 36
ffor which I say if þat þe lust to here
Moralite and vertuous matere
And þan þat ȝe wil ȝeue me audience
I wil ful fayne at c*ri*stes reuerence 40
Doon ȝou plesaunce leeful as I can
But trusteþ wel I am a soþeren man
I can not gest. rum ram. ruf by letter
Ne god woote Ryme hold I but lite better 44
And þerfore if ȝou lust I nyl nat glose
I wil ȝou telle a mery tale i*n* prose
To knytte vp al þis feest and make an ende
And Ih*es*u for his grace wit me sende 48
To schew ȝou þe way in þis viage
Of þilk p*ar*fite glorious pilg*ri*mage
That hight Ier*usal*em celestiall
And if ȝe vouchesauf anoñ ȝe shall 52
Bygynne vpon my tale for which I prey
Telle ȝour avis I can no better seye
But naþelees þis meditaciõn
I putt aye vnder correccion 56
Of clerkes for I am not textwell
I take but þe sentence trusteþ well
Therfore I make protestacioñ
That I wil stonde to correccioñ 60

Vpon þis woord we han assented sone 61
ffor as it semed it was forto done
To enden in som vertuous sentence
And forto ȝeue hym space *and* audience 64
And bad our hoost he shulde to hym seie
þat alle we to telle his taile hym preye
Our hoost had þe wordes for vs alle
Sir preest quod he now faire mot ȝou byfalle 68
Say what ȝou lust and we shullen gladly here
And wiþ þat word he saide in þis manere [leaf 272, back]
Telleþ quod he ȝoure meditacioun
But hasteþ ȝou þe sonne wil a-doun 72
Beeþ fructuous and þat in litel space
And to do wel god sende ȝou his grace. 74
¶ **Thus endeþ þe prologe of þe persons tale**

THE PARSON'S TALE.

A TREATISE ON PENITENCE, IN 3 PARTS:

Part I. On **Penitence**, and its 1st requisite **Contrition (A)** (p. 593—612).
Part II. On its 2nd requisite, **Confession (B)** (p. 612—679).
Part III. On its 3rd requisite, **Satisfaction (C)** (p. 679—684), with the Writer's Leave-taking and Retractations (p. 684-85).

PART I. (p. 593—612).

ON **PENITENCE**, AND ITS 1ST REQUISITE, **CONTRITION**.

Proem on Jeremiah vi. 16. The Tale is to be on *Penitence* as a full noble way to lead folk to Christ, and is to treat of
i. 'what is Penitence' (p. 594).
ii. 'whennes it is cleped Penitence'. [*not in the Tale.*]
iii. 'in how manye maneres been the acciouns or werkynges of Penitence' (p. 594-5).
iv. 'how many speces ther been of Penitence' (p. 595).
v. 'whiche thynges apertenen and bihouen to Penitence' (p. 595—682: nearly all Parts I and III, and all Part II).
vi. 'whiche thynges destourben Penitence' (at end of Part III, p. 682) (p. 593).

i. **Penitence** defined, by *a.* St Ambrose; *b.* 'som doctour'; *c.* the writer. Its requisites: 1. bewailing of sins; 2. purpose to have shrift, to do satisfaction, never to sin again, to continue in good works (p. 594).
[ii. *not given.*]
iii. The 3 actions of Penitence: 1. Baptism after sin; 2. not to do deadly sin after baptism; 3. not thus to do venial sin (p. 594-95).
iv. The 3 speces or kinds of Penitence: 1. Solemn (to be put out of church, or do open penance); 2. Common (to go naked on pilgrimage); 3. Private (p. 595).
v. The 3 necessities or requisites for Penitence (p. 596—682):
A. Contrition of heart (p. 596—612).
B. Confession of mouth (Part II, p. 612—679).
C. Satisfaction (Part III, p. 679—682).
Penitence avails against 3 things, by which we wrath Christ (p. 595).

A. Contrition is the root of Penitence, whose stem bears branches and leaves of Confession, and fruit of Satisfaction.
Contrition also bears a seed of grace, whose heat draws men to God. (Simile of the child and his nurse's milk.)
Penance is the tree of life (p. 596).
Four Points to be known about Contrition:
1. What it is; 2. the causes that move a man to it; 3. how to be contrite; 4. what it avails the soul (p. 597).
2. The 6 Causes that should move a man to Contrition:
a. Remembrance of Sins (p. 597-8).
b. Whoso does sin is the Thrall of Sin (p. 598-99).
c. Dread of the Day of Doom and the Pains of Hell (p. 599—604). These described: the Doom (p. 599-600); Job's 'lond of mysese and of derknesse' (p. 600-1); the 3 shames in hell against (1) 'Honours, (2) delices, and (3) richesses' (p. 611); poverty in 4 things: no treasure, food, clothing, or friends (p. 602); and no delights of the 5 senses. The pain shall be eternal (p. 603). Hell is orderless (p. 603-4). The 7 causes why the damnd have lost all hope (p. 604).
d. Remembrance of the good works we've left undone, and the loss of the good works done while we were in sin (p. 604-6). Deadly sin wipes out all good works formerly done (p. 605); and no good works can be done in deadly sin (p. 605-6). The new French song, *J'ai tout perdu mon temps* (also quoted in Chaucer's late poem of *Fortune*).

e. Remembrance of Christ's suffering for our sins (p. 606). In man's sin, every ordinance is turnd up-so-down (p. 607). For this disorder Christ sufferd (p. 608).
f. The hope of 3 things: 1. Forgiveness of Sins, 2. the Gift of Grace to do well, 3. the Glory of Heaven (p. 609).
3. How to be contrite. Contrition must be universal and total: for sins of thought, for desires against God's law, for wicked words as well as wicked deeds (p. 610). Contrition must be angwishous and continual (p. 609-11).
4. How Contrition helps the soul. It sometimes delivers a man from sin; destroys the prison of hell; cleanses the soul; changes the son of Wrath to the son of Grace (p. 611-12).

PART II (*no.* v. *continued*).

B. CONFESSION (THE 2ND REQUISITE FOR PENITENCE) (p. 612—679).

B. Confession. § 1. (l. 317) 'what is confession' (p. 612).
§ 2. 'wheither it oghte nedes be doon or noon' (p. 672-9).
§ 3. 'whiche thynges been couenable to verray Confession' (p. 674-79).

CONFESSION, § 1.

1. 'Confession is verray shewynge of synnes to the preest' (l. 318) (p. 612). We must understand too
a. (l. 321) 'whennes that synnes spryngen' (p. 612—15).
b. 'how they encreessen' (p. 615-16; 672-74).
c. 'whiche they been' (p. 616—672).
1.*a.* Sin sprang from the fall of Adam (p. 612). The legend of Adam and Eve told (p. 613). From Adam we took Original Sin, and were born sons of eternal damnation; but Baptism rescues us; though we keep liability to temptation, or Concupiscence (p. 613-14).
Concupiscence, or the nourishing and occasion of sin. St Paul and St Jerome's temptations (p. 614-15).
1.*b.* How Sin grows in a man. 1. by Concupiscence; 2. Subjection to the Devil; 3. Hesitation; 4. Doing, the Sin becoming Actual (p. 615-16).
1.*c.* Sin is *a.* venial, *β.* deadly (or mortal).
a. 1. Venial Sin defined. It skips into Deadly Sin. (Simile of the drops of water into a vessel's hold drowning the ship;) (p. 616).
β. 1. Deadly Sin defined (p. 617).
a. 2. Of divers small venial sins, hardly thought sins (p. 617-18); eating, drinking, talking, too much; using your wife too much; not visiting the sick (p. 617); talking vanities at church, &c. (p. 618). Cure of venial sins by love to Christ, prayer, confession, good works, receiving the Sacrament, holy-water, &c. (p. 618).
1.*c.* *β.* 2. *The Seven Deadly Sins.* The Chieftains, head and spring, of all other Sins (p. 619).
i. Pride (p. 619-26), and its Remedy (p. 626-8).
ii. Envy (p. 628-30), and its Remedy (p. 630-1).
iii. Ire or Anger (p. 631-42), and its Remedy (p. 642-5).
iv. Accidie or Sloth (Discontent, Ennui) (p. 645-49), and its Remedy (p. 650-1).
v. Avarice or Covetousness (p. 651-7), and its Remedy (p. 657-8).
vi. Gluttony (p. 658-9), and its Remedy (p. 660).
vii. Lechery (p. 660-8), and its Remedy (p. 668-72).
i. PRIDE (p. 619—626). Its 16 (and more) Twigs. 1. Disobedience, 2. Boasting, 3. Hypocrisy, 4. Despite, 5. Arrogance (p. 619), 6. Impudence, 7. Swelling of Heart (rejoicing in harm done), 8. Insolence, 9. Elation, 10. Impatience, 11. Contumacy, 12.

Presumption, 13. Irreverence, 14. Pertinacity, 15. Vain-glory, 16. Jangling (chattering).

A private kind of pride (the Host's Wife's and Wife of Bath's[1]), wanting to go to offering first, &c. (p. 620).

Two kinds of Pride, *a.* 'within man's heart', *b.* without; *b.* being the sign of *a.*, 'as the gaye leefsel atte Taverne is sign of the wyn that is in the Celer'[2] (p. 620-21), *b.* outside pride.

a. in dear clothing, 1. superfluity of it: its cost, furring, chisel-holes, dragging in the dung, waste of material (p. 621), unfitness for giving to the poor: 2. scantness of it: showing men's privy members, and buttocks (like a she-ape's rump), and the former as half-flayd, in parti-colourd hose[3]. The 'outrageous array of Women' (p. 623).

β. in horses (p. 623), and vicious grooms to tend 'em; plate-harness, &c.

γ. in household: keeping too many retainers or servants, who oppress the poor (p. 624).

δ. in table: not asking the poor to feasts; having burning and ornamented dishes[4]; too costly cups, &c., and too choice minstrelsy (p. 624).

What Pride sins are deadly, and what venial (p. 624).

The Sources of Pride (p. 624): goods of Nature, Fortune, Grace (p. 624). The Folly of Pride in any of these goods of Nature: 'we ben alle of o fader and of o mooder, and . . of o nature'[5]. The general signs of *Gentleness.* (The flies calld 'bees', and their stingless king) (p. 625); 3 gifts of Grace; 3 of Fortune. The brittleness of popular praise[6] (p. 626).

The Remedy against Pride.

Humility or Meekness, and its 3 kinds: in 1. heart, 2. mouth, 3. works. 4 kinds of each of these (p. 626-27).

ii. Envy (p. 627-30): defined by the Philosopher and St Augustine. It springs from Malice (p. 627).

Malice; 2 kinds of: 1. hardness of heart, or recklessness; 2. opposing truth (p. 627).

The 2 kinds of Envy (p. 628): 1. sorrow at other men's prosperity; 2. joy at other men's harm: whence comes

Backbiting; 5 kinds (p. 628): 1. praise with a *but* at the end; 2. turning well-meant things upside down to ill ones; 3. lessening a neighbour's goodness; 4. putting one man above another; 5. glad listening to scandal (p. 628).

Grudging or murmuring (p. 628): 1. against God (p. 629); 2. Murmuring from avarice, 3. from pride, 4. from envy; 5. among Servants, who say 'the Devil's *Paternoster* 6. Murmuring from ire or hate: thence, *a.* Bitterness of Heart, *b.* Discord, *c.* Scorning; *d.* Accusing (p. 629); *e.* Malignity (p. 630).

The Remedy against Envy (p. 630-31).

Love of God and one's neighbour. How a man shall love his neighbour. How an enemy is included in the name 'neighbour' (p. 630). 3 Remedies of Love, against 3 deeds of Hate (p. 631). Love is the medicine that casts out the venom of Envy from man's heart (p. 631).

iii. Ire or Anger (p. 631-42), and its 2 kinds: *a.* good Ire or Wrath (p. 632); *b.* wicked Ire, and its 2 kinds: sudden ire, and ire of malice aforethought (p. 632-33).

Three Shrews that forge in the Devil's furnace: Pride, Envy, and Contumely (p. 633).

[1] Melibe-Monk Link, B. § 11; and General Prologue, A.

[2] Chaucer's father no doubt had a sign outside his wine-shop or tavern in Thames Street, London.

[3] The outspoken and somewhat coarse abuse of the new fashions in dress is a great change from Chaucer's admirable Third-Period chaff of the moral short-comings of the monks and friars, &c., in the Prologue and middle Tales. If this is not change of man, it's change of mood.

[4] Chaucer must have seen plenty of these when he was page, valet, and squire.

[5] Compare Chaucer's *Gentleness*, &c. [6] Compare Clerk's Tale, Part VI, st. 135.

Wrath takes away a man's wit and spiritual life (p. 634).
Fruits of Wrath: 1. Hate. 2. War and wrong. 3. Manslaughter, *a.* spiritual; *b.* bodily (p. 634).
a. The 3 kinds of spiritual Manslaughter (3, calld 6 in MSS. p. 634): 1. by Hate. 2. by Backbiting. 3. Giving wicked Counsel, by Fraud (p. 634).
b. bodily Manslaughter: slaying with your tongue, giving orders or counsel to slay a man (p. 634).
Manslaughter in deed: its 4 (that is, 7) kinds (p. 635): 1. by law: a Justice condemning a man to death; 2. justifiable homicide, in defence of one's own life; 3. by misadventure: shooting an arrow, &c.; 4. a woman overlying her child; 5. a man making a woman barren by drinks, &c., killing the fœtus within her, shedding his seed in the wrong place; a woman killing the child in her womb; 6. a woman killing her child (after birth) for shame; 7. a man by lechery or blows killing a fœtus.
(Sixteen) other sins coming from Ire or Anger.
1. blaming or despising God, as hazarders do (Cp. *Pardoner's Tale*) (p. 635); and those who treat of the Sacrament of the altar irreverently (p. 636).
2. Attry anger: making angry false excuses for sin.
3. Swearing, which dismembers Christ (p. 636).
a. Of lawful Swearing, before a Judge: its 3 conditions, and its motives; *b.* God's name and Christ's, not to be taken in vain (p. 637); *c.* swearing for gentility or manliness (p. 638); *d.* swearing suddenly; *e.* of Adjuration and Conjuration by enchanters and necromancers; *f.* of Divination by Dreams, &c.; *g.* of Charms for Wounds and Maladies (p. 638).
4. Lying (p. 638), and its 6 kinds.
5. Flattering. How Flatterers are the Devil's Nurses, his Enchanters and Chaplains (p. 639).
6. Cursing that comes of irous heart: Malison.
7. Chiding and Reproach (p. 640); (specially a chiding wife[1]) (p. 640-41).
8. Scorning (p. 641).
9. Giving wicked Counsel (p. 641).
10. Sowing and making Discord (p. 642).
11. Double tongue (p. 642).
12. Betraying of Counsel (p. 642).
13. Menace.
14. Idle words.
15. Jangling (chattering) (p. 642).
16. Japing (joking) (p. 642-43).

The Remedy against Anger (p. 643-5). Debonairtee and Patience (p. 643). Four kinds of grievances, and their remedies: 1. wicked words, 2. loss of goods, 3. harm of body, 4. outrageous labour (p. 644).
Incentives to Patience. Story of the Philosopher and Child (p. 644-45). Obedience comes from Patience (p. 645).

iv. Accidie, or Sloth (Discontent, Ennui) (p. 645-49), is an enemy to the 3 states of man,—1. innocence (p. 645), 2. prayer (p. 646), 3. grace;—and to one's livelihood. Its 12 bad consequences (p. 646): 1. Sloth (and its remedy); 2. Dread to begin good works (p. 646); 3. Wanhope, or Despair (and its Remedy) (p. 647); 4. Somnolence (p. 648), and 5. Negligence, or 6. Recklessness, and the Remedy for each; 7. Idleness; 8. *Tarditas*, or tarrying before turning to God (p. 649); 9. Lachesse, or giving up a good work begun; 10. Coldness; 11. Undevotion; 12. Worldly sorrow (p. 649).

The Remedy against Accidie (p. 650-51): Fortitude or Strength, and its 5 kinds. 1. Magnanimity[2] or great Courage; 2. Faith or Hope; 3. Assurance; 4. Magnificence; 5. Constancy (p. 651).

[1] Does Chaucer here refer to his former wife?

v. AVARICE (p. 651-57). The difference between Avarice and Covetousness (p. 651); and between an Idolater and an avaricious man (p. 652). Of Covetousness, and lords' extortion from their bondmen: "humble folk been Cristes freendes" (p. 652-53). The Duty of lords to their thralls or churls. Of those that pillage Holy Church (p. 653-54); lords who plunder the poor are like wolves (p. 654). Of Deceit between Merchant and Merchant (p. 654). Of honest bodily Merchandise (the surplus of one country may be sent to help another) (p. 654). Of spiritual Merchandise, or Simony, and its 2 kinds (p. 655),—thieves that steal Christ's souls get livings (p. 655-56);—Hasardry or Games of Chance (p. 656). Other outcomes of Avarice (p. 656): 1. Lying, 2. Theft (bodily and spiritual) (p. 656-57), 3. False Witness, 4. False Oaths (p. 657).

The Remedy against Avarice (p. 657): Mercy and Pity, and reasonable Liberality (p. 658). Of foolish largess (p. 658).

vi. GLUTTONY (p. 658-59), and its 5 kinds (p. 659): 1. Drunkenness, or the burial of man's reason; 2. a troubled spirit; 3. bad way of eating; 4. distemperd bodily humours; 5. forgetfulness. Or, as St Gregory says, 1. eating too soon; 2. eating too delicate food; 3. taking too much; 4. troubling too much about cooking food; 5. eating greedily: these are the 5 fingers of the devil's hand (p. 659).

The Remedy against Gluttony (p. 660): Abstinence, and its fellows. Temperance, Shame, Content with plain food, Moderation, Soberness, Sparing (p. 660).

vii. LECHERY (p. 660). Its punishment in the Old Testament (p. 660). Adultery, and the desire of it (p. 661-62).

The 5 fingers of the Devil's other hand (p. 662); 1. foolish looking; 2. villainous touching; 3. foul words; 4. kissing (old dotards, and dry dogs at a rose-tree (p. 662); and how a man should love his wife); 5. the stinking deed of lechery (p. 663). Its kinds: 1. Fornication. Taking a maid's maidenhead, or 100th fruit (p. 663). 2. Adultery, defined. 3. Harms following from it: *a.* breaking of faith; *b.* theft (of the wife's body from her husband (Joseph and Potiphar's wife), and of her soul from Christ); *c.* breaking God's commandment, and defouling Christ (p. 664). Of Harlots and Bawds (p. 665). Adultery is set between Theft and Manslaughter. More kinds of Adultery: 1. by Men bound by Religious Vows, &c.; 2. those in Holy Orders (p. 665). Lecherous Priests are like a free Bull in a town, and they eat raw flesh of folk's wives and daughters (p. 666); 3. by man and wife copulating for pleasure only (p. 667); 4. copulation with kinsfolk, spiritual (or godchildren) or fleshly (blood relations). 5. the abominable unmentionable sin; 6. Pollution, of 3 kinds: 1. too rank humours; 2. weakness (p. 667); 3. evil thoughts (p. 668).

The Remedy for Lechery (p. 668): I. Chastity and Continence.

1. in Marriage. (The true effect of Marriage. One husband to have one wife (p. 668). How a man should behave to his wife (p. 669). How the wife should be subject to her husband (p. 669), and be moderate in behaviour, discreet in words, &c. (p. 669-70). The 3 causes for which man and wife may copulate (p. 670): *a.* begetting of children; *b.* to pay the mutual debt of their bodies; *c.* to avoid lechery (p. 670). The 4th cause, pleasure, is deadly sin (p. 670-71).)
2. In Widowhood; 3. Virginity (p. 671).

II. Special avoidance of causes of lechery: *a.* eating and drinking; long sleeping; *b.* the person who'd tempt you (p. 671-72). (I wish I could tell you the Ten Commandments; but it's too high doctrine (p. 672).) [End of *Confession*, § 1, *c.*]

Sin is in heart, mouth, deed, by the 5 Wits (p. 672).

§ 1.*b.* (see p. 615-16.) The 7 Circumstances that encrease or aggravate sins (p. 672). 1. the person who sins (male or female, &c.); 2. the kind of sin (fornication or homicide); 3. the place it was committed in (as in a church, by a priest) (p. 673); 4. for what motive; 5. the number of times it was committed; 6. by what temptation; 7. how it was committed; and all other circumstances (p. 674).

CONFESSION, § 2, § 3 (p. 674-79).

Profitable Confession, and its 4 (= 3) *Conditions* (p. 674):

1. sorrowful bitterness of heart (p. 674); its 5 signs: *a.* shamefastness (like the Publican's) (p. 675); *b.* humility; *c.* fulness of tears (p. 675); *d.* no hesitation (like the Magdalen) for shame; *e.* obedience to receive penance laid on you (p. 675).
2. speedy Confession (p. 676); its 4 Conditions: *f.* that it be well thought over; *g.* the greatness and number of sins must be understood; *h.* the sinner must be contrite, and *i.* avoid occasions of sins.
3. Shrift must be made to one man, not more (p. 676).

True Shrift, and its 10 *Conditions* (p. 677): 1. that it be of free will; 2. that it be lawful (both sinner and priest, Popish); 3. that it be not despairing of Christ's mercy; 4. that a man accuse himself only, and not another; 5. that it be not lying (accusing oneself of sins never committed) (p. 678); that it be by one's own mouth, and not by letter; 7. that the sin be not painted with fair words; 8. that the shrift be to a discreet priest; 9. that the shrift be not made for vain-glory, but for fear of Christ; 10. that the shrift be not made suddenly, for a joke (p. 678). You may be shriven more than once for the same sin; and should be houseld once a year (p. 679).

PART III (*no.* v. *continued, and no.* vi.).

SATISFACTION (THE 3RD REQUISITE FOR PENITENCE) (p. 679—684).

In *α.* Alms. *β.* bodily punishment.

α. Alms and its three kinds (p. 679): 1. Contrition of heart. 2. Pity for one's neighbour's faults. 3. Giving good counsel to other's souls and bodies (food, visits in prison, burial). These Alms should be done privily, if possible (p. 680).

β. Bodily Punishment (*Penance*), *of* 4 *kinds:* 1. Prayers (chiefly of the Paternoster, whose expounding I leave to Masters of Theology) (p. 680). 2. Watching, and its 3 kinds: forbearing, *a.* meat and drink, *b.* worldly jollity, and *c.* deadly sin (p. 681). 3. Fasting, and its 4 kinds: Liberality to poor folk; spiritual gladness of heart; not grudging at fasting; reasonable eating. 4. Virtuous teachings, or Discipline: *a.* by word, writing, or example; *b.* by wearing hairshirts., &c., next your skin, scourging yourself, taking evils and injuries patiently (p. 682). [End of no. v. in Part i; p. 593.]

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vi. The 4 Things that disturb Penance [no. vi, or last §, of p. 593 at foot] (p. 682). 1. Dread, and its remedy. 2. Shame, and its remedy. 3. Hope: *a.* of long life, and *b.* consequent overconfidence in Christ's mercy (p. 683). 4. Wanhope, or Despair of Mercy; its 3 kinds: *x.* from great and long continued sin; *y.* from falls-back into sin; *z.* from not being able to persevere in goodness (p. 683).

The fruit of Penance (p. 683-4).

EPILOGUE.

The Author's Leave-taking, and Lament over, and Withdrawal of, his Sinful Books, &c. (p. 684-85).

[*Petworth MS, on leaf* 272, *back.*]

[*There are no breaks in the MS. Tyrwhitt's are kept here to prevent slight differences in the texts throwing the Six-Text out of gear.*]

And here bygynneþ þe person his tale. ¶ Capitulum xxiiij^m.
Ieremie vj^to. ¶ State super vias & videte & interrogate de Semitis / antiquis que sit / via bona & ambulate in ea & inuenietis refrigerium animabus vestris:

[75] O Wre swete lord god of heuene þat no man wil perisshe but wil þat we commen al to the knowleccħ of hym and to þe blisful lif þat is perdurable [76] ammosshe þ vs by þe prophet Ieremye þat seiþ in þis wise [77] ¶ Stondeþ vp-on þe wayes and seeþ and askeþ of olde Patthes þat is to sayne of olde sentences whicħ is þe good way [78] and walkeþ in þat way and ȝe shul here refresshyng for ȝoure saules. &c [79] ¶ Mony bene þe waies espiritual þat leden folk to oure lord Ihesu crist and to þe regne of glorie. [80] Of whicħ way þer is a ful / noble wayo and a ful couenable whicħ may not faile to man / ne to womman þat þourgħ synne haþ mysgoon from þe riȝt way of Ierusalem Celestiał [81] ¶ And þis way is cleped Penytence of whicħ men shuld gladly harken *and* enquere wiþ al his herte [82] to wete what is Penaunce. and whi it is cleped penitence / and in how mony maners bene þe accions of worchynge of penytence. [83] and howe mony spices þer bene of penytences. and whiche þingges appertenen and byhouen to penytence. [and] whicħ þingges distrouben penytence ¶ Nota de penitencia.

¶ Ambrosius

[84] ¶ Seynt Ambrose seiþ. That penitence is þe laynyng of man for þe gilt þat he haþ done. [1] What is penytence[1] and no more to doon eny þinge for which hym ouȝt to playne. [85] And somme doctour seiþ. Penytence is þe waymentyng of man þat soroweþ for his synne. *and* pyneþ hym self for he haþ mysdone. [86] Penytence wiþ certeyn circumstaunces is verray repentaunce of man þat halt hym self in sorowe and oþer payn for his giltes. [87] And for he shal be verrey penytent. he shal first bywaillen þe synnes þat he haþ done and stedfastly proposed in his hert to haue shrift of mouþ and to doon satisfaccion [88] and neuere to doon þinge for whiche [2] hym ouȝte more to be-wayle or to compleyn and to contynue in good werkes or ellis his repentaunce may not

[1—1 *A sidenote copied into the text.*]

¶ Isidore./

availe. [89] ffor as seiþ y*sidere* ¶ he is a Iaper and a gabber and no verrey repentaunt þat eftsone doon þinge for whiche hym ouȝt to repent [90] wepinge and nouȝt forto stint to do synne may nouȝt auaile [91] ¶ But naþeles men shullen hope þat at euery time þat man / falleþ be it neuer so oft þat he may arise þorgh penytence. if he haue grace // But certeynly it is grete dout.

¶ gregorius./

[92] ffor as seiþ seint *gregorie*. Vnneþes ariseþ he out of his synne *þat* is chargeþ wiþ þe charge of euel vsage. [93] annt þer-fore repentaunt folk þat stint forto synne and forlete synne. er þat synne forlete hem holy churche holt hem siker of her sauacion [94] ¶ And he þat synneþ and verrely repenteþ hym in his last [day]. holy church ȝit hopeþ his saluacion by þe grete mercy of our lord Ihesu *crist* for his repentaunce. but take þe siker way certeyn:

¶ tres accione[s] *penitencie* 1°. accio.

[95] And now siþens I haue declared ȝou what þinge is penitence ¶ Now shul ȝe vnderstond þat þer bene iij. actions of penytence [96] ¶ The first is þat a man be baptist aftere þat he haþ synned [97] ¶ Seynt Austyn seiþ But he be penitent for his olde synful lif he may no bygynne þe newe

clene lif. [98] ffor certes if he be baptised wiþ-out' penitence of his olde gilt'. he resceyueþ þe mark of bapteme. but' not' þe grace ne þe remyssion of his synnes til he haue repentaunce verray [99] ¶ Anoþer defaute is þis. þat' men doon dedly synne aftere þat' þei han resceyued bapteme [100] ¶ The iij. defaute is þat' men falle in venyal synnes after' her bapteme fro day to day. [101] þerof seiþ seynt' Austyne. ¶ Augusti þat penitence of good and humble folk. is þe penitence of euery day

2ª. accio.

3ª. accio. /

[102] ¶ The spices of pen*au*nce bene þre. þat' oon of hem is solempne Another is comune. and the iij. is prive. [103] Eche pen*au*nce þat' is solempne is in two maners. as is to be put' out' of holy church̄ in lent' for sclaughtere of children and such̄ maner þingges [104] ¶ Another is whan man haþ synned openly of whiche synne þe fame is openly spoken in þe contre. and þan holy churche by Iuggement' distreyneþ hym forto doo pen*au*nce open. [105] So*m*me penaunce is *þer* is þat' preestes enioynen men. comonly *in* certeyn caas as forto goon p*er*auenture naked in pilg*ri*mage. or bare þe feet' [106] ¶ Privey pen*au*nce is þilk þat' men doon al day for privey synnes of which̄ we shryuen vs p*ri*vely and receyuen p*ri*ve pen*au*nce

¶ þe spices penaunce

¶ penitenc communis

¶ De secre penitencia

[107] [1]¶ Now shalt' þou vnderstond' what' by[ho]ueþ and is necessarie to *ve*rrey p*ar*fite penytence and þise stonden on þre þingges. [108] Cont*ri*cion of hert'. confession of mouþ. And satisfactiō [109] ¶ ffor which̄ seiþ Iohn̄ · Grisostom ¶ Penytence distreyneþ man to accept' benignely euery peyne þat' is enioyned hym wiþ contricion of hert' and shrift of mouþe. wiþ satisfaccion and worching' of al manere humilite. [110] And þis is fruytful penytence aȝeinst' iij. þingges in whiche we wreþen our lord' Ih*e*su *cri*st'. [111] þis is to / sayn be delite in þenkinge. by rechelesnesse in spekinge. by wikked synful worchinge. [112] and aȝeinst' þise

¶ Grisosto

¶ Hou penaunce may be likned to a tree

wikked giltes is penytence. þat may be likned vnto a tre [113] The rote of þis tree is contricioñ þat hideþ hym in þe herte of him þat is verrey repentaunt. riȝt as þe roote of a tree hideþ hym in þe erþe. [114] ¶ Of þe roote of contricion sprynge þ a stalk þat bereþ braunches and leeues of confession. and fruyt of satisfaction [115] ¶ ffor which Crist seiþ in þe gospell ¶ Doþ digne fruyte of penytence. for by þis fruyte may men knowe þis tre. and not by þe roote þat is in þe hert of man.. ne by þe braunches ne by þe leeues of confessioñ

¶ Textus.

[116] ¶ And perfore our lord Ihesu crist seiþ þus By

¶ Of þe seed of contricioun.

þe fruyte of hem shul ȝe knowe hem [117] ¶ Of þis roote springeth a sede of grace. .þe which sede is modere of sikernesse. þus þis sede is eger and hote. [118] The grace of þis / sede springeþ of god þorowe þe remembraunce of þe day of dome. and on þe peynes of

¶ Salomon.

helle [119] ¶ Of þis matere seith salomon. þat in þe degre of god man forleteþ his synne [120] The hete of this seede is þe loue of god / and þe desiring of þe Ioie perdurable. [121] þis hete draweþ · þe hert of man to god and doþ him hate his synne. [122] ffor soþly þer nys no þinge þat sauoureþ so wel to a childe as þe mylk of his norice. ne no þing is to hym more abhominable þat þilk mylk what it is medled wiþ oþer mete. [123] Riȝt so þe synful man þat loueþ his synne. hym semeþ þat it is to hym most swete of eny þinge. [124] But fro þat tyme þat he loueth sadly our lord Ihesu crist and desireth þe lif perdurable. ther nys to hym [no þing] more abhominable. [125] ffor soþ. þe lawe of god is þe loue of god. ffor which

¶ De propheta./

Dauid þe prophet seiþ. I haue loued þi lawe and hated wikkednesse ¶ he [þat] loueth god kepeþ his lawe and his

¶ Daniel./

worde. [126] This reson seiþ þe prophete Danyell in spirit vppon a vision of Nabugodonosor whan he [1] counsailled hym to doo penaunce. [127] Penaunce is þe tree of liff to hem / þat it receyuen. And he þat holdeþ hym

in verrey penytence is blessed aftere þe sentence of ¶ Salomon.
Salomon

[128] In þis penitence or contriciõn man shal vnderstonde .iiij. þingges. þat is to seyn what is contriciõn and whiche bene þe causes þat meuen a man to contriciõn and howe he shuld be contrite. and what contricioñ availed to þe soule. [129] Than is it þus. þat contricioñ is þe verrey sorowe þat a man receyueþ in his hert for his synnes with sad purpoos to schryuen hym and to do penaunce and neuere more to do synne. [130] And þis sorowe shal be in þis manere as seith seint Bernard ¶ It shal be greuous and hevie and ful ¶ Bernardus
sharp and poynant in hert. [131] ffirst for a man haþ a-gilt his lorde *and* his creature. and more sharpe and poynant: for he hath agilt his fadere celestiall. [132] And ȝit more sharpe and poynant ffor he haþ wreþed and agult hym þat bouȝt hym. þat with his precious blood haþe delyuered vs fro the boondes of synne and fro þe cruelte of þe deuell. and fro þe paynes of helle. [133] ¶ The causes þat ouȝten to meuen a man to con- ¶ Sex mouimenta ad contricionem.
triciõ bẽ .vj. ¶ ffurst a man shal remembre him of his synnes. [134] but loke þat þilk remembraunce be to him no delite by no way. but gret shame and sorowe for his gilt. ffor Iob seiþ. Synful men doñ ¶ Iob./
werkes worþi of confessioñ. [135] And þerfore seiþ Ezechie. I wil remembre me al þe ȝeeres of my lif. ¶ Ezechiel.
my bitternesse of myn hert [136] ¶ And god seiþ in þe apocalips ¶ Remembre ȝou from whennes þat ȝe be ¶ Apocalypsis./
falle. ffor byforn þat tyme þat ȝe synned ȝe were þe children of god. and lymmes of þe reigne of god. [137] But for ȝoure synne ȝe bene woxe þrall and foule. and membres of þe feende. hate of aungels sclaunder of holy church. *and* foode of þe fals serpent perpetuele matere of the fuyre of hell [138] and þat more foule and abhomynable for ȝe trespasen so often tyme as doþ þe hounde þat turneþ to eten his vomyte. [139] And ȝit

bene ȝe foulere for ȝoure longe contynuyng in synne and ȝoure synful usage. for which ȝe bene roten in ȝo*ur* synne as a beest in his dunge. [140] ¶ Suche maner of þouȝtes maken a man haue shame for his synne
Ezechiell and no delite. As / god saiþ by þe p*ro*phete Ezechiele [141] ¶ ȝe shul remembre ȝou of ȝoure waies: and þei shul displese ȝou soþely ¶ Synnes beñ þe waies þat lede folk to hell

[142] ¶ The ij. cause þat ouȝt to / [1]make a man to haue disdeyne of synne is þis. That as seiþ seint
Petrus Peter ¶ Who so doth synne: is þral to synne and synne putteþ a man in gret praldome. [143] And þer-
Ezechiele fore seith þe p*ro*phete Ezechiel ¶ I went soryful in disdeyn of my silf. Certes ¶ wel auȝt a man haue disdeyn of synne and wiþ-drawe / hym from þat
Seneca þraldom and vilanye. [144] And lo what seiþ Senec ¶ In þis matere he seiþ þus ¶ Thouȝe I wist þat neiþer god ne man ne shuld neuere knowen it. ȝit wolde I haue desdeyne forto / do synne. [145] And the
Seneca / same Senec seiþ ¶ I am born to gretter þingg*es* þan to be praH to my body. [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] [146] A [fouler] þral may no man ne wo*m*man make of his body þan ȝeue is body to synne [147] A[l] were it the foulest cheerle or womman þat lyueþ and leest of valewe. ȝit is he chaunged and most foule and more in seruitute. [148] euer fro þe hyer degre þat man falleþ: þe more is he praH and more vnto god and to þe world vile and abhomyn-able. [149] O / ȝood god wel auȝt men haue desdeyn of synne. siþen þat þorgh synne. þer he was free nowe is he maked boonde. [150] & / þerfore seiþ seint
Aug*ustinus* / Austyn. ¶ If þou haue desdeyn of þi *seruaunt* if he a-gilt or synne. haue þou þan disdeyn þat þou þi silf shuldest do synne. [151] Take reward of þine valewe þat þou / ne be to foule to þi self. [152] Allas wel ouȝten þei þan to haue desdeyne to be

seru*au*ntes and þralles to synne and sore bene ashamed of hem self. [153] þ*a*t god of his endelees goodnesse haþ sett hem in hie astaat' and ȝeuen hem witt'. strength̄ of body. helþe. bewte. and prosp*e*rite. [154] and bouȝt' hem fro þe deeþ with̄ his hert' blood. þat' þei so vnkyndely aȝeinst' gentelnesse aquiten hym so vilenistly to sclowghter of her owne soules. [155] ¶ O good god. ȝe wo*m*men þat' bene of so grete bewte. remembreþ ȝou of þe prouerbe of Salamon ¶ He ¶ Salomo
[156] likneþ a fair' wo*m*man þat' is a foole of her body. ylik to a ryng' of gold' þat' is wreþed in þe Groyne of a sowe. [157] ffor riȝt' as a sowe ¶ wroteþ in euery ordure. So wroteþ she her bewte in stynkinge ordure of synne

[158] ¶ The iij cause þat' ouȝt' to meuen a / man to cont*r*icion̄ and drede of þe day of dome. and of þe / horrible peynes of helle. [159] ffor as seint' Ierom seiþ ¶ Ieromis
¶ Att' euery tyme þat' me remembreþ of þe day of dome I quake [160] ffor whan I ete or drinke or doo what' so I doo / euer me semeþ þat' þe trompe sowneþ in myn ere. [161] Riseth vp [1]þat' bene dede and co*m*meþ to þe Iuggement'. [162] O Good god mochel. oweþ a man to drede such̄ Iuggement' þer as we shulne bene alle as seiþ seint' Poule by-forne the strete of our lord' Ih*e*su ¶ Paulus
crist' [163] wher as he shal make a general congregacion̄. Wher as no man had be absent'. [164] for certes þer ne veileþ non̄ assoyn ne excusacion̄ [165] and not' only þat' our defautes shullen / be Iugged but' eke þat' alł our werkes shul openly be knowe [166] And as seint' Bernard' seiþ. There ne ¶ Bernar
shal no pledyng' availe ne no scleiȝt' we shul ȝeuen reknyng of euery ydel word' [167] Ther shul we haue a Iugge þat' may not' be deceyued. ne corrupte and whi for certes al oure þouȝtes ben diskeuered as to hy*m*. ne for preiere ne for mede he wil not' bene corrupte. [168] And þerfore seiþ Salomon. þe wreþe of god ¶ Salomo
wil not' be corrupte / And þerfor seiþ Salomon ¶ þe / wreche ¶ Idem.

of god ne wil not' spare no wiȝt' for preier ne for ȝift'. And
þer¶fore at' þe day of dome þer nys no hope to escape.
[169] Wherfore Anselme seiþ ¶ fful grete
Angwissh̄ shullen þe synful folk' haue at' þat tyme
[170] Ther shal be þe sterne and þe wroþe Iuge sitte aboue
and vnder hym þe horrible pitte of helle open to di-
stroye hym þat' most' byknowe his synne. which̄
synnes openly bene shewed byforn god and biforne
euery creature. [171] And on þe left' side moo deuels /
than hert' may þenk' forte harie and to drowe
þe synful soules / to þe pyne of helle. [172] And wiþ-
in þe hertes of folk' shal be þe bitynge conscience
and wiþ-out' forþ shal be þe world̄ al brennynge.
[173] whidere shal þan þe wrecched synful soule flee /
to hide hym. Certes he may not' hide hy*m*. he most'
come forþ and schewe hym. [174] ffor certes as seiþ
¶ Iero*nimus* seint' Ierom ¶ The erþe shal cast' hym out' of hym.
and þe see also and the Eiere. þat' shal be ful / of
þondere clappes / and liȝtnynge [175] Now soþly
who so wil remembre hym of þise þingges I gesse
þat' his þingges shal not' turne hym into delite. but' to grete
sorowe for drede of the payne of helle. [176] And þer-
¶ Iob./ fore seiþ Iob. ¶ Suffre lord þat' I may a while
biwaile and wepe or I goo and wepe wiþ-out' retournynge to þe
derk londe keuered wiþ þe derknesse of deþe [177]
to þe londe of myssese and of derknesse. where as is
shadowe of deeþ. wher as þer nys noon oþer or-
dyn*aunce*. but' grisly drete þat' euere shul last' [178]
¶ Loo here may ȝe seen þat' Iob preied of respite a while
to bywepe and waile his trespas. ffor soþly oo / day of
respite is bettere þan al þe tresoure of þis world̄ [179] And
[1] for as moche as a man may acquite hy*m* self to forn god
by penitence in þis world̄ and nouȝt' by tresour' þerfor
shuld he prei to god to ȝeue hym respite a while to
bywepen and bywaillen his trespas [180] ffor certes al
þe sorowe þat' a man myȝt' make fro þe bygynnynge

of þe world nys but a litel þing at þe regard of þe sorowe of helle [181] ¶ The cause why þat Iob clepeþ helle þe londe of derknesse. [182] Vnderstondeþ þat he clepeþ it londe or erþe. for it is stable and neuere shal faile. derknesse. for he þat is in helle haþ defaute of liȝt materiall [183] ffor certes þe derk liȝt þat shal come out of þe fire þat euere shal brenne shal turne hym al to peyne þat is in helle. ffor it shewe þ hym to þe horrible deuels þat hym tormenten [184] keuered wiþ þe derknesse of deþe [. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . [185] . . . .
no gap in the MS.] bene þe synnes þat þe wrecched / man haþ doñ whiche þat distourben hym to se þe face of god. riȝt as a derk cloude bytwix vs and þe sonne. [186] londe of myssese by cause þat þer bene .iij. manere of defautes aȝeinst þre þingges þat folk of þis world han in þis present liff. þat is to say honours. delices. and Richesse. [187] Aȝeinst honour han þei in helle shame and confusioñ. [188] ffor wel ȝe wooto þat men clepen honour þe reuerence þat men doon to man. But in helle nys noon honur ne reuerence. ffor certes no more reuerence shal be do to a kinge þan to a knaue [189] ¶ ffor whiche god seith by þe prophetys wordes Ieremye. ¶ Thilk folk þat me despisen ¶ Textus Ieremie shullen bene despised. [190] ¶ Honur is eke cleped gret lord Ther shal no wiȝt / seruen oþer. but of harme and torment ¶ Honure is eke cleped grete dignite and highnesse. But in helle shul þei bene al for-troden of deuels. [191] as god seiþ The horrible deuels shal goon and come vpon þe hedes of dampned folk And þis is for as moche as þe hier þat þei were in þis present lif. þe more shullen þei bene abated and defouled in helle. [192] ¶ Aȝeinst þe richesse of þis world. shullen þei haue myssese and pouerte. and þis pouert shal be .iiij. þingges [193] in defaute of tresour. of whiche

¶ Dauid prophetа

Dauid þe prophete seiþ ¶ The riche folk' þat enbraceden and oneden in al her hert to tresoure of þis world' shullen sclepe in þe sclepinge of deþ. As no þinge shul þei fynden in her hondes of al her tresour' [194] ¶ And more ouer þe dissese of helle shal bene in þe defaute of mete and drynk'. [195] ¶ ffor god seiþ þus by moyses ¶ Thei shullen be wasted with [1]hunger' and þe briddes of helle shal deuoure hem with bitter deþ and þe galle of þe dragon [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] her morseh. [196] And ferþer ouer her myssese shal bene in defaute of cloþinge ffor þei shullen be naked in body as of cloþing' sauf þe fuyr' in which þei brenne and oþer filþes. [197] and naked shul þei bene of saule. of al manere vertues which þat' is þe cloþinge of saule. Wher bene þan þe gay Roobes and þe soft' shetes and þe smal / shertes [198]

¶ Deus per moysem

¶ Isayas./

¶ loo what seiþ god to hem by þe prophete Ysay ¶ That' vndere hem shullen be strawed motthes. and her couertours / shul be of wormes of helle [199] ¶ And ferþer ouere her dissese shal / bene in defaute of frendes. ffor he nys not' poor þat' haþ good / freendes. but' þer nys no frende. [200] ffor neiþer god ne creature / shal be frende to hem. and euery of hem shal haten oþere wiþ dedly hate. [201] The sones of þe doughtren shullen rebellen azeinst' þe fadere and modere and kynrede azeinst' kynrede and chiden and despisen euerech of hem oþer boþ day and nyzt' As god seiþ by þe prophet' Michias [202] ¶ And þe louyng' children. þat' whilom loued so flesshly euerech oþer. wolden euerech of hem eten oþer if þei myzt'. [203] ffor howe shuld' þei loue hem to-gydere in þe peynes of helle. whan þei hated eche of hem oþer in þe prosperite of þis lif. [204] ffor trust' wel her flesshly loue was dedly hate as seiþ þe prophete dauid ¶ who so þat' louep wickednesse he hateþ his saule. [205] and who þat hateþ his owne soule. certes he may loue noon oþer wizt'

¶ Machias./

¶ Dauid./

in no manere. [206] and þerfor in helle is no frendship. But euer þe moo flesshly kynredes *þat* bene in helle. þe more cursyng þe more chydinge. and þe more dedly hate þer is amonges hem [207] ¶ And forþermor þer shal be defaute of al maner delyces. ffor why þe delices ben þe appetites of þe .v. wittes. as. siȝt. heryng. smellynge. saueryng and towchynge. [208] But in helle her siȝt shal be ful of derkenesse and of smoke and ful of teeres. and her heryng ful of waymentynge and of gnaistynge of teeþ as seith Ih*esus* / crist [209] ¶ her nose- ¶ Ihesu
þrelles shullen be ful stynkyng stynks ¶ And as seiþ
Isay þe prophete. Her saueryng shal be ful of bitter ¶ Isayas.
galle. [210] and touchyng of her body ykeuered
wiþ fuyr þat neuere shal be quenched. and wiþ wormes
þat never shul dye ¶ As god seiþ / by þe mouþ of ¶ Ih*esus*./
ysay. [211] ¶ And for as moch as þei shullen not wene
þat þei may dyen for peyne. and by her deþ flee fro
peyne. [1]þat may þei vnderstonde by þe worde of Iob. ¶ Iob.
þat seiþ. There as is þe shadowe of deþe [212] ¶ Certes
a shadowe haþ þe liknesse of a þinge of which it is
shadowe. But shadowe nys not þe same þinge of which it is
shadowe. [213] Riȝt so fareþ þe peyne of helle. it is
like deeþ for þe angwisshe horrible. *and* why for it
peyneþ hem euere as þoo men shulden dye anon But
certes þei shullen not dye. [214] ffor as seiþ seynt
Gregore. ¶ To wrecched Catyfe shal be deþe wiþ-out ¶ Gregorius./
deþe. ande ende wiþ-outen ende. and defaute wiþ-out
failynge. [215] for her deþe shal alway lyve. and her
eende shal euermor bygynne and her defaute shal not
faile. [216] And þerfore seiþ seint Iohn þe ¶ Iohannes Euaungelista
euaungeliste They shullen folowe deþ and þei shul
not fynden hy*m*. And þei / desiren to deye. and deþe
shul flee fro hem / [217] And eke Iob seith That in helle ¶ Iob./
is noon order ne rewele [218] And al be it soo þat god haþ
created al þing in riȝt ordre and no þing wiþ-

out' ordere. but' alle þingges ben ordred and nombred. ȝit' naþelees þei þat bene dampned bene no þinge in order ne holden / noon order'. [219] for þe erþe ne shal bere hem no fruyte. [220] ffor as þe / *pro*phete *dauid* seiþ ¶ God shal destroy þe froyte of þe erþe as fro / hem. ne watere shal ȝeue hem no moystere. ne þe eyre no refresshynge. ne þe fuyre no liȝt'. [221] ffor as seiþ seynt' Basile. þe brennynggs of þe fuyre of þis worlde shal god ȝeuen to hem in helle þat' bene dampned. [222] But' þe liȝt' *and* þe clernesse shal be ȝeuen in to heuene to his children./ Riȝt as þe good man ȝeueþ flesshe to his children. and bonys to his houndes [223] for þei shullen have noon hope to escape seiþ Iob. At' þe last' þat' ther shal horrour and grisly drede dwelle. wiþ-outen ende [224] ¶ Horroure is alway drede of harme þat' is to come and þis drede shal euer dwelle in þe hertes of hem þat' bene dampned. and þer-fore han þei lorn all her hope. for vij. causes. [225] ffirst' for god þat' is her Iuge shal be wiþ-oute mercy to hem. ne þei may not' plese hym. ne noon of his halowes. ne þei may ȝeue no þinge for her raunsom. [226] ne þei han no voys to speke to hym. ne þei may nat' flee fro peyne ne þei han no goodnesse in hem þat' þei may schewe to delyuere hem fro peyne [227] ¶ And þerfore seiþ Salomon ¶ The wikked man dyeþ: and whan he is dede he shal haue no hope to / eskape fro peyne. [228] who so shame wolde wel vnderstonde and bythenk' hym wel on þise peynes and þat' he haþ deserued þe same peynes / for his synne. Certes he shuld' haue more talent' to sike and to wepe [1]þan for syngen and to pley. [229] ffor as seiþ Salomon. Who so þat' had þe science forto knowe þe peynes þat' bene establisshed and ordeyned / for synne he wold make sorowe. [230] Thilk' science as seiþ seint' Austyn Maketh a man to weymenten in his hert'

¶ *dauid propheta.*/

¶ Basilius./

¶ Iob./

¶ Salomon./

¶ Salomon

¶ *Augustinus.*

[231] ¶ The iiij. poynte *þat'* aught' make a man

haue contr*i*tiõ is þe soryful remembraunce of þe good þat' he haþ lost' to doon here in erþe. and eke þe good / þat' he haþ lorne [232] ¶ Soþly þe good werkes þat' he haþ lost' eiþer þei bene þe good werkes þat' he haþ wrouȝt' er he felle into dedly synne Or ellys þe good werkes þat' he wrouȝt' þe while he lay in synne [233] ¶ Soþly þe good werkes þat' he did byforne þat' he fille in synne ben aH mortefied and astonyed and dulled by þe oft synnynge [234] That' oþer good werkes þat' he wrouȝt' þe whiles he lay in synne þei bene vtterly dede as to þe liff p*er*durable in heuene. [235] Than / þilk good werkes þ*at*' bene mortefied by oft' synnynge whicH good werkes he did þe whiles he was in charite ne mowen neuere / quicken aȝein with-outen v*er*rey penytence. [236] And þerfore seiþ god by þe mouþe of Ezechiele þat' is þe riȝtful man. Retourne aȝein from his riȝtwissnesse and to worcH wikkednes shal he lyue. [237] nay. ffor aH þe good werkes þat' he haþ wrouȝt' ne shul neuere be in remembraunce for he shal deye in his synne. [238] ¶ And vpon þilk chapitere seiþ seint' Gregorie thus. than we shuld' vnderstonde þis principaly. [239] þat' whan we doon dedly synne. it' is for noȝt' þan to reherce or drawe into memorie þe good werkes þat' we han wrouȝt' biforn. [240] ffor certys in þe wirking' of dedly synne þer nys no trest' to no good werk' þat' we han doon to-forne / þat' is to sayn as forto haue þer-by þe lif p*er*durable in heuene [241] [. . . . . .

¶ Ezechiele

¶ Gregorius super Ezechielem

. . . . . .

. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] Whan we han contricioñ. [242] But' soþly þe good werkes þat' men / doon whiles þat' þei bene in dedly synne. for as mocH as þei weren doon in dedly synne þei mowe neuer quycken aȝein [243] ffor certes þing' þat' neuere haþ lif ! neuere may quycked. And naþelees al be it' þat' þei ne availe nouȝte to han þe lif p*er*durable ȝit' availen

þei to abreggen of þe peyne of helle or ellis to geten temporeł richesse. [244] Or ellis þat' god wil rather enlumyne and / lighten þe hert' of þe synful man to han repentaunce. [245] and eke þei availen forto vsen a man to do goode werk' þat' þe fende / haue þe lasse power of his soule [246] ¶ And þus þe curtaise Lord Ih*es*u crist' ne wil þat' no good werk' be lost'. ffor in somwhat' it' shal availe. [247] But' for as moche as þe good werkes [1]þat' men doon whan þei bene in þis liff' bene al mortefied by synne folowinge. And eke siþens al þe good werkes þat' men done þe whiles þei bene in dedly synne bene vtterly dede as forto haue þe lif *per*durable [248] ¶ wel may þat' man þat' no good werk ne / dooþ · syngyn þilk newe songe. Iay tout *per*due moñ temps et moñ labour [249] ffor certes synne byreueþ a man goodnes and nature and eke þe goodnes of grace [250] ¶ ffor soþ þe grace of þe holy goost' fareþ as fuyre þat' may not' be ydeł. ffor fire failleþ / anoon as it' forleseþ his worchinge [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] [251] þan leseþ þe synful man þe goodnes of glorie þat' oonly is bihiȝt' to good men þat' labouren and worken [252] wel may he be sory þen that' oweþ al his lif to god as longe as he lyueþ haþ lyued and eke as longe as he shal bene þat' no goodnes ne haþ to pay wiþ his dette to god. to whom he oweþ al his lif. [253] ffor trust' wel he shal ȝeue acountes as seiþ seint' Bernard of alle þe goodes þat' han bene ȝeuen hym. in þis present' lif and how he haþ hem dispended. [254] not' so moch þat' þer shal not' perisshe an heer of his hede. ne a moment' of an / houre ne shal not perisshe of þis tyme þat' he ne shal ȝeue of it' a rekenynge

¶ Bernard*us*

[255] ¶ The .v. þinge þat' ouȝt' to meue a man to contr*i*cion is remembraunce of þe passion of our Lord Ih*es*u crist' suffred for oure synnes [256] ffor as seiþ seynt' Bernard whiles þat' I lyue ¶ I shal haue remem-

¶ Bernard*us*

braunce of þe travailes þat' our lord Ih*e*su crist' suffred in preching' [257] in werynesse in travailynge. his temptacions whan he fasted. his longe waking' whan he preied. his teeres whan þat' he wepte for pite of good puple. [258] þe woo and þe shame and þe filþe þat' men seiden to hy*m* oft foule spittyng' þat men / spitten on his face / and þe buffett*e*s þat' men ȝauen hym of þe // foule mouþes and of þe repreeus þat' men to hym seiden. [259] Of þe nailles wiþ þe which̄ he was nailled to þe cros. and of al̄ þe remen*au*nte of his passioñ þat' he suffred for my synnes. / *and* no þinge for his gilt'. [260] And ȝe shul vnderstond' þat in mannys synne is euery maner order' of ordyn*au*nce turned vp so doun. [261] ffor it' is soþ þat' god and resoñ and sensualite and þe / body of man bene so ordeyned þat' euerech̄ of þise iiij. þingg*e*s shuld haue lordship of þat' oþer. [262] As þus. god. shuld' haue lordship ouer resoñ. and reson ouer sensualite. and sensualite ouer þe / body of man. [263] And soþly whan man synneþ al þis ordere of ordynaunce is turned vp so doune [264] ¶ And þerfore þan for as moch̄ [1]as þe reson of man wil not' be subiette ne obeysaunt' to god' *þat'* is his lord by riȝt' þerfore leseþ it' þe lordship þat' it' shuld haue in sensualite and eke ouer þe body of man. [265] And whi for sensualite rebelleþ þan aȝeinst' resoñ. And by þat' way lesetħ resoun his lordship ouer sensualite and ouere þe bodye. [266] ffor riȝt' as reson is rebelle to god. riȝt' so is boþ Sensualite rebel̄ to reson and þe body also. [267] ¶ And certes this ordyn*au*nce and þis rebellioñ. oure lord Ih*e*su *crist'* abouȝt' vppon his precious body ful dere and herkeneþ in which̄ wyse. [268] ffor as moche þan is resoñ rebelle to god. þerfore is man worþi to haue sorowe and to be dede [269] ¶ This suffred our lord' Ih*e*su for man aftere þat' he had be bytraied of his disciple and destreyned and

bounde so þat þe blood brast out at euery naile of his
¶ Augustinus. hondes as seiþ seint Austyn [270] ¶ And ferþermore
for as moche as reson of man wil not daunte Sensu-
alite whan it may. therfore is man worþi to haue shame.
and þis / suffred our lorde Ihesu crist for man whan þei
spitten in his visage [271] ¶ And ferþer ouere for as
moch̄ þan as the catif body of man is rebelle
boþ to reson and to sensualite. þerfore is it worþi þe
deeþ [272] ¶ And þis suffred our lord Ihesu crist for man
vpon þe crosse wher as þer was no parte of his body
free with-oute grete peyne and bitter passiō [273]
and al þis suffred Ihesu crist þat neuer forfeited
[. . . . . .
. . *no gap in the MS.*] To mochel am I peyned for þe
same þingges þat I neuer deserued and to mochel defoiled
for frendship þat man bene worþi for to haue [274] And þer-
¶ Bernardus fore may þe synful man wel saye as seiþ seint Bernard
¶ Acursed be þe bitternesse. [. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] [275] ffor certes
aftere þe dyuers discordaunces of oure wikkednes
was þe passion of Ihesu crist yordeyned in dyuers þingges
[276] as þus. Certys synful man saule [is] bytraied
of the deuel by coueityse of temperele prosperite and
scorned by disceite whan he cheseþ flesshly delites and
ȝit is he tormented by impacience of aduersite. and by-spette
by seruage of subieccioñ in synne / and at þe last it is
sclayn fynally. [277] ffor ¶ þis disordinaunce of synful man
was Ihesus crist first bytraied and aftere þat was he bounde
that come forto vnbynde vs of synne *and* of peyne [278]
¶ Than was he byscorned þat only shuld be
honoured. in alle þingges of al þingges. [279]
Than was his visage þat auȝt be desired to be seyn
of al mankynd [1]In whiche visage aungels desiren to
loken vileynsly byspitte. [280] Than was he scourged
þat no þing gilt And fynaly þan was he /
crucified and sclayn [281] Than was he accomplised þe

wordes of Ysay / He was wounded for ¶ ysaias!/.
our mysdedys and defouled by oure vilanyes. [282]
¶ Now siþens þat' Ihesu crist' toke vppon hym self' þe
peyne of al oure wikkednesse ¶ Michel ouȝt' synful
men by-wepe and by-waile þat' for his synnes goddis sone
of heuene shuld al þis peyne endure [283] ¶ The sixt'
þinge þat' auȝt' meue man to contricioñ is þe hope
of iij. þingges. þat' is to say forȝeuenes of synne
and þe ȝift' of grace wel forto doo. And þe / glorie of
heuene wiþ þe whicħ god shal guerdon man for his
good dedys. [284] and for as moche as Ihesu crist'
ȝeueth vs þise ȝiftes of his larges and of his soueryn
bounte. þerfor is he cleped / Ihesus Nazarenus rex
iudeorum. [285] Ihesus is forto seyn Saueour or sa-
uaciōn on whoom men shullen hope to haue forȝeuenesse of
synnes whicħ þat' is proprely sauacioñ of synnes
[286] ¶ And þerfore seide þe aungel to Ioseph̄. þow ¶ qualiter an-
clepest' his name Ihesus þat' shal saue his puple from her gelus locutus
synnes [287] And here-of seiþ Seint' Petrer ¶ Ther nys Iosepho./
noon oþer name vnder heuene þat' is ȝeue to eny man
by whicħ a man may be saued. but' oonly Ihesus [288]
Nazarenus is as moche for to seyn as florsshinge in
whicħ a man shal hope þat' he þat' ȝeueth hym remissioñ
of synnes shal ȝeue also hym grace wel to doo for
in þe floure is hope of fruyte in tyme comynge and in
forȝeuenesse of synnes hope of grace wel to doo. [289] I
was at' þe door of þine hert' seith Ihesus and cleped forto
entre. He þat' opneþ to me shal haue forȝeuenesse of
synne [290] I wil entre into hym by my grace and
soupe wiþ hym by þe good werkes þat' he shal doñ
whicħ werkes bene þe foode of god. and he shal soupe
wiþ me by þe grete Ioie þat' shal be ȝeue to hym [291]
Thus shal man hope. þat' for his werkes of penaunce
god shuld ȝeue hym his regne as he bihoteþ hym in the
gospel

[292] ¶ Now shal man vnderstonde in whicħ

manere shal be þis contricioñ I say þat it shal bene vniversale and total This is to saie. a man shal be verrey repentaunt for al his synnes þat he haþ doon in delite of his þouȝt. ffor delite is ful perilous [293] ffor þer bene twoo / manere of consentyngges that oon of hem is cleping consentynge of affectioñ whan a man is meued to do synne and deliteþ hym longe forto þenk on þat synne [294] he haþ reson aperceyued / [1]wel þat it is synne aȝeinst þe lawe of god [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] al þouȝe his reson ne consent not to doon þe synne in dede. [295] ¶ ȝit seyn somme doctours þat suche delite þat dwelleth longe it is ful perilous al be it neuere so lite [296] And also a man shuld sorowe namely for al þat euere he haþ desired aȝeinst þe lawe of god wiþ parfite consentynge of his resoñ. ffor þerof is no ¶ doute þat it is dedly synne in þe consentinge [297] [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] and into dede. [298] Wherfore I say þat mony men. ne repenten hem neuer of suchñ þouȝtes and delices ne neuere shryuen hem of it. but only of þe dede. of grete synnes outward. [299] wherfore I say þat suchñ wicked delites and wicked þouȝtes bene subtile bygylers of hem þat shullen be dampned [300] ¶ More ouere man ouȝt to sorowen for his wicked wordes and for his wicked dedys ffor certes þe repentaunce of a syngulere synne and noȝt repent of al her oþer synnes. or ellis repente hym of al his oþer synnes and not of syngulere synne may not availe. [301] ffor certes god almyȝty is al good. and þerfore he forȝeueþ alle or ellis riȝt nouȝt [302] ¶ Augustinus./ and hereof seiþ seynt Austyne ¶ I wote certeynly [303] þat god is enemye to euery synner ¶ and how þan he þat obserueþ oon synne. shal he haue forȝeuenesse of þe

remenaunt of his oþer synnes. Nay [304] ¶ And forþer ouere / contricion shulde be woundes soryful and anguisshous and þerfore ȝeueþ hym god pleynly his mercye. And / þerfore whan my soule was angwisshous wiþ-in me I had remembraunce of god þat my preiere myght come to hym. [305] ¶ fferþer ouer contricioñ most be continueH. and þat men han stedfast purpoos to shryue hym and forto amende hym of his lif. [306] ffor soþly þe whiles contritioñ lasteþ man may haue hope of forȝeuenes. And of þis commeþ hate of synne. þat destroieþ synne boþ in hym self and eke in oþer folk at his power. [307] ffor whiche seiþ dauid / ¶ ȝe þat louen / god haten wikkednes. ffor ¶ Dauid./
tresteþ wel to loue god is forto to loue þat he loueþ. and hate þat he hateþ nota

[308] ¶ The last þing þat men shal vnderstond in contricioñ is þis. wherof aviileþ contricioñ ¶ I say þat somtyme contricioñ delyereþ man fro synne. [309] of whichñ þat dauid seiþ. I say (quod dauid) ¶ Dauid./
þat is do say ¶ I purpose me fermely to shryve me. And þou lord relesedest my synne. [310] And riȝt so as contritioñ [1]availetH not wiþ-outen sad purpoos of shrift [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] or Satisfactioñ wiþ-out contricion. [311] And more? ¶ Contricion destroieþ þe prison of helle and maketh it waike and febleþ þe strengthes of þe deuels and restoreþ þe ȝift of þe holy goost and of aH vertues [312] and enterly clenseþ þe saule of synne and delyereþ þe soule from þe peyne of helle and fro þe company of deuels and fro þe seruage of synne. and restoreþ [it] to aH goodys espiritueH into þe company [and] comunyoñ of holy churche. [313] And ferþer ouer it makeþ hym þat whilom was þe sone of yre þe sone of grace. And aH thise þingges he proueþ by holy writt. [314] and þerfore he þat wil sette his entent to / þise þingges he is

wis. ffor soþ he shuld not' þan in al his liff haue corage to synne But' þan his body and al his hert' to þe seruise of Ih*es*u c*rist*' and þ*er*of done him homage. [315] ffor certes our swete lord Ih*es*u c*rist*' haþ spared vs so / deuourly in our folies þat' ȝit' he ne had pite of ma*nn*ys / soule a sory songe myȝt' we alle synge. ¶ **Explicit' p*r*ima p*ar*s penitencie. Incipit' se*cun*da / p*ar*s eiusdem./**

¶ 2a *pars* penitencie

[316]
¶ THe seconde p*ar*te of penitence is co*n*fessiõ þat' is signe of cont*r*iciõ [317] ¶ Now shul ȝe vnderstonde what' is confessiõ. and whedere it' ouȝt' nedes to be or noon. and whiclh̃ þingges bene conable to verrey co*n*fessiõ

[318] ¶ ffirst' shalt' þou vnderstonde þat' confessiõ is verrey shewinge of synnes to þe preest' [319] þis is to sey verrey. ffor he mot' confessen hym of al þe condicions þat bylongen to his synne as ferforþ as he can. [320] al mote be seide and no þing' excused ne hid ne forwrapped. and nouȝt' au*aun*te him of his good werkes. [321] ¶ And forþer ouer. It is necessary to vnderstond*e* whennes þat' synne springeþ and how þei encresen. And whiclh̃ þer bene

[322] in spryngynge of synnes. as seiþ seint' poule in þis wise. / ¶ That' riȝt' as by a man. synne entred furst' into þe ¶ worlde. and þorghe þat' synne deide. Riȝt' so þilk deeþ entreþ into al men þat' synden. [323] And þis man was // Adam by whom þat' synne entred into þis world' whan he brak' þe comaundement' of god. [324] and þ*er*fore he þat' first' was so myghty þat' he shuld' not' haue deyde. bycame suche oon þat he most' nedys dye whedere he ¶ [1] wolde or noon. and al his progeny þat' is in þis world' þat' in þilk manere synne dyen. [325] Loke þat' in þe astate of Innocentys ¶ whan A[dam a]nd Eue

naked weren in paradise. and no þingᵉ shame ne hadden of her nakednesse. [326] How þatᵉ serpentᵉ þatᵉ was mostᵉ wily of alꝗ oþer beestes þatᵉ god haþ maked seide to þe wo*m*man ¶ Comaunded god to ȝou ȝe shuldᵉ notᵉ eten of euery tree in paradys [327] ¶ The wo*m*man answerd of þe fruyte q*uo*d she of þe trees in paradise we feden vs. Butᵉ soþly of þe froyte of þe tree þatᵉ is in þe myddel of paradys god for-bede vs forto ete ne notᵉ touche itᵉ. lestᵉ p*ar*auenture we shulld dyen [328] ¶ The serpentᵉ saide to þe wo*m*man. nay. nay. ȝe shullen deye of dethe. ffor soþ god wote þatᵉ whatᵉ day þatᵉ ȝe eten þerof. ȝo*ur* eien shullen open. and ȝe shullen ben as goddys knowynge good [and] harme [329] ¶ The womman seie þatᵉ þe tree was good to fedynge and faire to þe eyen and delitable to þe siȝtᵉ she toke of þe fruyte of þe tree and ete of hitᵉ./ and ȝaf itᵉ to her husbonde and he eete. and anoon þe eyen of hem boþ opned / [330] and whan þatᵉ þei knewe þatᵉ þei were naked þe[i] sewed of fige leeues in manere of breche to hiden her membres [331] ¶ Here may ȝe see þatᵉ dedly synne haþ furstᵉ suggestion of þe feende as schewe þ here by the naddere. And afterwardᵉ þe delitᵉ of þe flesshꝫ as schewe þ here by Eua. And after þatᵉ þe consentingᵉ of þe resoñ as schewe þ by. adam [332] ¶ ffor trustᵉ wel þoȝe so were þat þe fende tempted oon þatᵉ is to saie þe flesshꝫ. And / þe flesshꝫ had delite in þe bewte and þe froyte deffended ȝitᵉ certes til þatᵉ reson þatᵉ is to sayn Adam consented. to þe etinge of þe fruyte þatᵉ stood hiȝe in astate of Innocence. [333] þilk Adam toke · þilk synne of OriginaH. ffor of hem flesshly descended. bene we alꝗ and engendred. of vile and corrupte matere. [334] And whan þe soule is puttᵉ in our body. riȝtᵉ anoon is contracte origynal synne. *and* þatᵉ was eerstᵉ butᵉ only peyne of concupiscens ⁝ is afterwardᵉ boþ peyne and synne. [335] And þerfore be we alꝗ yborn sones of

wreth and of dampnacioñ *per*durable if it nere baptisme þat we receyuen whicħ bynymeþ vs þe Culpe. But forsoþ þe peyne dwelleþ wiþ vs as þe [1] temptacion whicħ peyne hiȝt concupissens. [336] And þis concupissence whan it is wrongfully disposed or ordeyned in man it makeþ hym to coueite coueitise of flessħ flesshly synne by siȝt of his eyen as to erþly þingges and eke couetise of hynes of pride of hert

[337] ¶ Now as to speke of þe furst Coueitise þat is concupiscence After þe lawe of o*ur* membres þ*at* weren lawfully maked and by rightful Iuggement of god. [338] I say for as moche as man is not obeysaunt to god þat is his lord þerfo is his fleissħ to hym disobeisaunt þorghe concupiscens [. . . . . .
. . . . . .
[339] . . . . . .
. . . *no gap in the MS.*] it is impossible but if he be tempred. somtyme in his flessħ and anoyed to synne [340] And þis þing may not faille as longe as þat he lyueþ. it may wel wexe feble and faile. by vertue of bapteme and by þe g*rac*e of god. þourghe penitence. [341] but fully shal it neuere quenche þat he ne shal somtyme be neued in hy*m* self. but he were aH refreyned by siknes or by malefice of sorcerie or cold drinkes
¶ Paulus [342] ffor what seiþ seint Poule. þe flessħ coueiten aȝeint þe ¶ spirit. and þe sprit aȝeinst þe flessħ þei bene so contrarie and so striuen þat a man may not allway as he wolde [343] ¶ The same seint paule aftere his grete pen*au*nce in water and in lond in water by nyght. and in day by grete p*er*ile and in grete peyn*e* in londe and enfamyne and thrust in colde and cloþes. & onys scorned almost to þe deþe. [344] ȝit seid he allas I catiff man. who shal deliuere me from þe p*ri*son
¶ Ieromin*us* of my catif body [345] And seint Ierom whan he longe tym had wōnned in deserte where as he had no company. but beestes. wher as he had

no mete but herbes. and watere to his drink. ne no bed / but þe naked erþe. for whiche his flessh was blak as an / Ethiopen for hete and neighe destroied for colde [346] ȝit seide he. þe brennynge of lecherie boiled in al his body. [347] Wherfore I woote wel sikerly þat þei bene desceyued þat saien þat þei ne bene not tempted in her body. [348] Witnesse of seynt Iame þe apostel. ¶ Iacobus :/ þat seiþ þat euery wiȝt is tempted in his owne concupiscence. þat is to say þat euerich of vs haþ matere and occasion to be tempted of þe norsshinge of synne þat is in his body. [349] And þerfor seiþ seint Iohn ¶ Iohannes Euaungelista./ þe Euaungelist ¶ ȝif þat we seyne þat we be wiþ-outen synne we disceyuen our self. *and* trouþe is not in vs.

[350] Now [1]shullen ȝee vnderstonde in what manere þat synne wexeþ and encreseþ in man. The furst þing is þilk norshyng of synne of which I spak byforn þilk concupiscens [351] and after þat commeþ þe subieccion of the deuel. þis is to saye the deueles bely þi which he bloweþ in man þe fire of concupiscence. [352] ¶ And aftere þat a man byþenkeþ hym whedere he wil doo or noon þilk þinge to which he is tempted [353] and þan if þat a man wiþstonde and waye Off þe furst entisinge of his flessh and of þe feende þan is it no synne And if it so be þat he do not soo þan feleþ he anon a flaumbe of delite [354] and þan it is good to be ware and to kepe hym wel. Or ellis he wil falle anon into consentyng of synne and þan wil he do it if he mowe haue tyme and space. [355] And / of þis matere seiþ Moyses by ¶ Moyses :/ þe deuel in þis manere. The fende seiþ I wil chace and pursue þe man by wicked suggestions and I wil hent hym by mouyng or stiringe of synne And I wil departe my prise or my prey by deliberacioun. and my lust shal be accomplised by delite ¶ I wil drawe my swerde in consentynge. [356] ffor certes riȝt as a sweerde departeþ a þinge in twoo peces Riȝt

so consenting[t] departeþ god fro man and than wil I sclee hym wiþ myn honde in dethe / of synne. þus seiþ þe feende [357] ffor certes þan is a man al dede in saule and þus is synne conplised by temptacion by delite and by consentinge and þan is synne cleped [1] aūuiel // [[1] ū *for* ct *or* cc]

[358] ffor soþe synne is in two maners / eiþer it[t] is venial synne or dedly synne. ¶ Soþly wha*n* man loueþ eny creature more þan Ihesu crist[t] our creature þan is it[t] dedly synne And venial synne it is if man loue Ihesu crist[t] lasse þan hy*m* ouȝte. [359] for soþ þe dede of þis venial synne is ful perilous. ffor it[t] amenuseþ þe loue þat[t] man shuld haue to god more and more [360] And þerfor if a man charge more hy*m* self wiþ mony such venyal synnes. certes but[t] if it[t] so be þat[t] he somtyme discharge hy*m* of hem by shrift[t] þei may ful liȝthly amenuse in hy*m* al þe loue þat[t] he haþ to Ihesu crist[t] [361] and þis scipped venial into dedly synne. ffor certes þe more þat[t] a man chargeþ his saule wiþ venial synnes. þe more is he enclyned to falle in dedly synne [362] And þerfor lat[t] vs nat[t] be negligent[t] to discharge vs of venyal synnes. ffor þe prouerbe seiþ þat[t] mony smale makeþ a grete. [363] And harken þis ensample A grete wawe of the See commeþ somtyme wiþ so grete a violence þat[t] it[t] drencheþ þe shippe and þe same harme doon somtyme þe smale dropes of water þat[t] entreþ þorgh a litel creues into þe thorrok and into þe botme of þe shipp. if men be so necligent[t] þat men ne [2] discharge hem not[t] by tyme [364] And þerfore al þouȝe *þere* be difference bytwixe þise twoo causes of drenching[t]. algates þe ship is dreint[t] [365] ¶ Riȝt so fareþ it[t] somtyme of dedly synne and of annoyous / venyal synnes whan þei multiplie in a man so gretly þat[t] þilk worldly þingges þat[t] he loueþ þorgh which he synneþ venyally is as grete in his hert[t] as þe loue of god or more [366]

And þerfor þe loue of euery þinge þat is not bysette in god ne doon principaly for goddes sake al þof a man loue it lasse þan god. ȝit is it venyal synne. [367] And dedly synne whan þe loue of eny þinge. weieþ in þe hert of a man as moch as þe loue of god. or more [368] more dedly synne as seiþ seint Austyn. ¶ Augustin is whan man turneþ his hert fro god which þat is verrey souereyne bounte þat may nat chaunge. and ȝeueþ his hert to a þinge þat may change and flitte. [369] and certes þat is every þinge sauf god only of heuene. ffor soþ is ȝif þat a man ȝif his loue þe which þat he oweþ al to god wiþ al his hert vnto a creature. certes as moche of loue as he ȝeueth to whiche creature so moche [he] byreueþ fro god [370] and þerfore dooþ he synne. ffor he þat is dettour to god ne ȝeldeþ not al his dette to god þat is to sayn al þe loue of his hert

[371] ¶ Now siþens a man vnderstondeþ generally which is venyal synne. þan is it conable to tellen of special synnes which þat mony a man parauenture ne demeþ hem not synnes ne schryuen hem nat of þe same þingges and ȝit naþelees þei bene synnes [372] and soþly as clerkes writen þis is to say þat euery tyme þat a man eteþ or drinkeþ more þan suffiseth to þe sustinaunce of his body in certeyn he doþ synne [373] ¶ And eke whan he spekeþ more þan it nedeþ. it is synne. eke whan he harkeneþ not mekely þe complaynt of þe poore. [374] eke whan he is in hele of body and wil not fast whan oþere men fast withouten cause resonable. Eke whan he sclepeþ more þan nedeth or whan he commeþ by þilk enchesoñ late to church or to oþere workys of charite. [375] Eke whan he vseþ his wiff wiþ-outen souereyne desire of engendrure to honure of god. Or for þe entent to ȝeelde to his wiff þe dette of his body. [376] Eke whan he wil not visite þe seke or þe prisoners when he maye.

Eke if he loue wiff or child or eny worldely þing more þan reson requireþ. Eke if he flatere or blaundissh more þan hym ouȝt for eny necessite./ [377] ¶ Eke if he amenuse or wiþdrawe þe almesse of þe poor./ [1]¶ Eke if he apparailleþ his mete more deliciously þan nede is. or ete it to hastely by licourousnesse [378] ¶ Eke if he tale vanytees at þe churche or at goddes seruise. or þat he be a talker of ydel wordys of foly or of vilanye. for he shal ȝeelde accountes of it at þe day of dome [379] ¶ Eke whan he bihoteþ or assureþ to done þingges þat he may not perfourme ¶ Eke whan þat by liȝtnesse of foly [he] mysseieþ or scorneþ his neighbour [380] ¶ Eke whan he haþ eny wikked suspeciōn of þinge þer he ne wote of it no soþfastnesse [381] ¶ Thise / þinges and moo wiþ-out nombre bene synnes as seiþ seynt Austyne

¶ Augustinus.

[382] ¶ Now shul men vnderstonde þat al be it soo þat noon / erþely man may eschwe all venial synnes. ȝit may he refreyn hym by þe brennyng loue þat he haþ to our lord Ihesu crist and by preiers and confessioun and oþer good werkes so þat it shal but litel greue. [383] ffor as seiþ seynt Austyne. If a man loue god in such manere þat al þat euere he dooþ is in þe loue of god / or for þe loue of god verreyly. for he brenneþ in þe loue of god. [384] ¶ loke howe moche þat a drope of watere þat falleþ in a fournays ful of fuyre annoyeþ or greueþ so moche annoyeþ a venyal synne vnto a man þat is parfit in þe loue of Ihesu crist [385] ¶ Men may also refreyne venyal synne by þe receyuynge of þe precious body of Ihesu crist [386] By receyuyng eke of holy watere. by almes dede. by general confessiōn of confiteor at þe mas. at complyne. and by blessing of bisshoppys and of preestes and by other good werkes.

¶ Idem./

¶ Sequitur de septem peccatis mortalibus. scilicet de Superbia. et eorum dependencijs. circumstancijs & spectantibus. /.

[387]
¶ Now is it bihouely þinge to tellen whicħ bene dedly synnes þat is to say Caytifnesse of synnes al þei renne in cooles. but in dyuers manere ¶ Now bene þei cleped Caytif for as moche as þei bene cheef. and spryngen of aħ oþer synnes [388] Of þe roote of þise vij. synnes. pride is þe general rote of al harmes. ffor of þis roote springen certeyn braunches. as Ire. Envie. Accidie. or scloweth. Auarice. or couetise to comon vnderstondinge. Glotenye. and lechery. [389] And euerich of þise chief synnes haþ his braunches and his twigges. as shal be declared in her chapiters folowynge.

[De superbia.]

[390] And þouȝe so be þat no man can / telle vtterly þe nombre of þe twigges and of þe harmes þat commeþ of pride. ȝit wil I shewe a party of hem as ȝe shul vnderstond. [391] Ther is **Inobedience Auauntinge. Ypocresie. Despite. arrogance. Imprudence. Swellinge of hert. Insolence. Elacioun. Pertinacie. veynglorie. Inpacience ¶ strif. Contumacie. presumcioun. irreuerence** ¶ and mony anoþer twigge þat I can not declare [392] ¶ Inobedient is he þat disobeieþ for despite to þe comaunment of god and to his souereyns and to his goostly fadere [393] ¶ Auauntour is he þat booste of þe harme or of þe bounte þat he haþ doon [394] ¶ Ipocresie is hee þat hideþ hym to shewe hym suchi as he is. and scheweþ hym suche as he is not [395] ¶ Dispitous is he þat haþ disdeyne of his neighbours þat is to sayn of his euen / cristen or haþ despite to doo þat hym ouȝt to doo [396] ¶ Arrogance is he þat þenkeþ þat he haþ þilk bountes in hym that he haþ not. or

weneþ þat' he shuld haue hem of his desertes. or ellis *þat'* he demeþ þat' he be. þat' he nys nouȝt' [397] ¶ Impudent' is he þat' for his pride haþ no shame for his synne [398] ¶ Swelling' of *her*te is he. whan a man reioyseþ hy*m* of harme þat' he haþ doñ [399] ¶ Insolent' is he. *þat'* despiseþ in his Iuggement' al oþer folk as to regarde of his valewe and of his co*n*nynge. and of his spekinge. and / of his berynge [400] ¶ Elacioñ is whan þat' he ne may neiþ*er* suffre to haue maistrie ne felawe [401] ¶ Inpacient' is he þat' wil not' bene ytauȝt' ne vndernome of his vices and by strif werreieþ / trouþe wittyngly and defendeþ his folye [402] ¶ Contymax is he þat' þorghe his indignaciōn is aȝeinst' euerich auttorite or power of he*m* þat' bene his souereyns [403] ¶ Presumpciōn is he. whan a man takeþ an emprise *þat* hy*m* ouȝt' not' to doo. or ellis he may it' nouȝt doo and þat' is called Surquidrie ¶ Irreuerence is whan men don*e* nat' honure þer as hem ouȝt' to doon. and waiten to be reuerensed [404] ¶ P*er*tynacy is. whan a man defendeþ his foly. and trusteþ to moche to his owne witte. [405] ¶ Veynglorie is forto haue pompe and delite in temporel heuynesse and glorifie hem in worldly estates [406] ¶ Iangelynge is whan a man spekeþ to moche toforn folke and clappeþ as a mylle. and takeþ no kepe what' he saiþ.

[407] and ȝit' is þer a p*r*ivey spice of pride þat' waiteþ first' to be halowed or he wil be salwed' al be he lasse worþi þan þat' oþere is p*ara*uenture and eke he waiteþ or desireþ to sitte or to goo aboue hym in þe way or kys paxe or bene ensensed or goon / to offringe byforn his neighbour [408] and such [. . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] a proude desire to be magnyfied / and honoured to forn þe puple.

[409] ¶ Nowe beñ þere twoo maners of pride. þat' oon of hem is wiþ-in þe h*er*te [1]of man and *þat'*

oþer is wiþ-out' [410] ¶ Of which soþly þe for seide þingges and moo þan I haue seide appertenaunte to pride þat' is in þe herte of man. And þerto oþer spices of pride bene wiþ-outen [411] But' naþelees oon of þise spices of pride is signe of þat' oþer/ Riȝt' as / þe gay leeueseH att' tauerns is signe of þe wyne þat' is in þe salere. [412] As þis is in mony þingges as in speche and in countenaunces. And in outrageous araye of cloþinge / [413] for certes of þis nad he no synne in cloþinge. Crist' wold not' so sone haue noted and spoke of þe cloþinge of þilk' riche men in þe gospeH [414] ¶ And as seiþ seynt' Gregore. þat' precious cloþing' is coupable for þe derþe of hit'. and for his soþnesse and for his straungenesse. and for his disgisenesse and for þe superfluite. or for þe inordinate scantnesse [. . . . [415]

¶ Nota de superbia vestimentorum.

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]

[416] as to þe furst' synne þat' is in superfluyte of cloþinge which þat' makeþ it' so dere to harme of þe puple [417] þat' only þe cost' of enbrawdynge. þe degyse endentynge or barringe. owdyng' palynge. or bendinge. and semblable waast' of cloþinge in vanyte [418] But' þer is also costlewe furringe in her gownes / so moch pownsenynge of Chisels to maken holes. so mochel daggyng' of sheres [419] forþwith the Superfluyte in length of þe forseide gownes tralynge in þe dunge and in þe myre on hors and eke on foote as wel of man as of womman þat' al þilk traillyng' is verrely as in effecte waasted. consumed. thredbare and roten wiþ dunge raþer þan it' is ȝeuen to þe poor to grete damage of þe forseid poor folk' [420] and þat in sondrie wise This is to seyn. þe more þat' cloop is waasted þe more mote it' cost' to þe puple for þe scarcenesse [421] ¶ And ferþerouere if it' so be þat' þei wolde ȝeue suche pounsoned and

dagged cloþing' to þe poor folk'. it' is not' conuenient' to were for her estate ne suffisaunt' to bete her necessite to kepe hem from þe desp*er*aunce of þe firmament' [422] ¶ On þat o*þer* side to speke of þat' disordynat' scant*er*nesse of cloþinge as bene thise Cutted scloppes or hanselynes þat' þorgh̄ her schortnesse ne keuere not' þe shameful membres of man to wikked entent' [423] Alas som*me* of hem shewen þe Shappe and þe bote of þe horrible swollen menbres þat' semeþ like to þe malady of hirnia in the wrapping' of her hosen. [424] and eke þe buttokkes of hem þ*at* faren as it' were þe hynder part' of assh*e* ape in þe ful of þe mone. [425] And more ouer the wrecched swollen membres þat þei / shewe þorgh̄ disgisinge in departinge of her hosen white *and* [1] rede semeþ þat' half hy*re* shameful prive membres weren flayn*e* [426] and so be þat' þei departen her hosen in oþere colours as is white and blak' or white and blewe or blak' and rede and so / forþ. [427] þan ne semeþ it' as by variaunce of coloure þat' half' þe party of his privey membres bene corrupte by þe fuyr of seynt' Antonye or by cancre or by oþer such̄ meschaunces [428] ¶ ȝit' of þe hyndere parte of her buttokkes it' is ful horrible forto see. for certes in þat' party of her body þ*er* as þei purgen her stynkinge ordure [429] þat' foule party shewe þei proudely to þe puple in despite of honeste. which honeste þat' Ih*es*u c*ri*st' and his frendes obserued to shewe in his lif [430] ¶ Now as to outragious aray of wo*m*men god woote þouȝe þe visage of hem semen ful chaaste and debonaire. ȝit' notefyen þei i*n* her aray of a-tyre likerousnesse and p*ri*de [431] ¶ I say not' þat' honeste in cloþinge of man and wo*m*man is vnconable. but' c*er*tes þe super*f*luite or þe disordynate scantite of cloþinge is reproueable [432] ¶ Also þe synne of anornament' or apparaile in þingges þat' app*er*tenen to ridynge. as into mony delicate horses þat' bene holden

for delite. þat þei bene so faire. fatte and costlewe. [433] and also mony a vicious knaue Meyntened by cause [of hem] and in to curious harnays and in sadels. In cropours in peytrellis and brideH keuered wiþ precious cloþe and riche barres and plates of golde and of siluere. [434] ffor which god seiþ by Sakarye þe prophete ¶ I wil confounde þe riders of suche horses [435] ¶ This folk' taken litel rewardinge of þe rydinge of goddes sone of heuene and of his harnays whan he rode vpon an asse and had noon oþer harnayes but' cloþes of his poor disciples. ne w[e] ne rede not' þat' euere he rode on oþer beest' // [436] I speke þus of þe synne of superfluyte and not' for þe resonable honeste whan reson it requireþ. [437] And ferþer / ouer certes pride is gretly notefied in holdinge of grete mayne whan þei bene of litel profit' or of riȝt' of no profite [438] And namely whan þat Mayne is felenous and damagous to þe puple by hardynesse of hie lordship or by wey of office. [439] ffor certus such lordes foylen þan her lordshipes to þe deuel of helle whan þei sustene þe wikkednesse of her mayne [440] ¶ Or ellis whan þise folk' of lowe degree. as þilk þat' halden ostelers. sustene þe þeft' for her ostilers and þat' is in mony [1] maners of disceytes. [441] Thilk' manere of folk' bene þe flies þat' folowen þe honye Or ellis þe houndes þat' folowen þe Careyn which forseide folk stranglen spirituelly her lordshipes. [442] ffor which þus seiþ Dauid þe prophet ¶ Wikked deþ mote come on þilk lordeshipes and [god] ȝeue þat' þei mote descende a doune into helle. ffor in her houses bene iniquitees and shrewdenesses and not' god of heuene. [443] And certes but' if þei done amendement' Riȝt' so as god ȝaf his blessinge to Pharao by þe seruise of Iacob. & to Laban by the seruise of Ioseph. Riȝt' so god wil ȝeue his malison to suche lordshippes as to sustene þe wikkednesse of her seruauntes [. . . .

¶ Zacharia propheta

¶ Dauid propheta./

. . *no gap in the MS.*] [444] ¶ Pride of þe table appereþ eke ful oft'. for certes / riche men bene cleped to feestes and poor folk' ben putte away and rebuked [445] in excesse of dyuers metes and drynkes and namely suche man*er*e of bake metes [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] and of semblabled waast so þat' it' is / abusion forto þenk' [446] and eke in grete preciousnesse of vesseH *and* curiosite of Mynstralcie by þe which a man is stired þe more to delices of luxurie [447] If so be þat' he sette his hert' lesse vpon *our* lord Ih*e*su crist' certeyn it' is a synne And certeynly þe delites / myȝt' bene so grete in þe caas þat' men myȝt' liȝtly falle by he*m* into dedly synne [448] ¶ The Espices þat' sourden of p*ri*de. soþly wha*n* þei sourden of malice ymagyned and avised and forn cast'.. or ellis of vsage bene dedly synnes. it' is no doute. [449] And whan þei sourden by freelte vnavised sodeynly and sodeynly wiþdrawe aȝein. aH bene þei greuous synnes I. gesse þat' þei be not' dedly [450] ¶ Nowe myght' men aske wherof þat' p*ri*de sourdeþ and springeth. And I say somtyme it' springeþ of þe goodes of nature and somtyme of þe goodes of fortune. and somtyme of þe goodes of grace. [451] Certes þe goodes of nature stonden in þe goodes of body or goodes of soule [452] Certes þe goodes of body bene hele of body strength delyuernesse. beute. gentrie. ffraunchises [453] ¶ Goodes of nature of þe saule bene good wiþ sharpe vnderstondinge sotile engin ¶ vertu material. good memorie [454] ¶ Goodes of fortune ben richeses hye degrees of lordshipes. preisynges of þe puple [455] ¶ Goodes of grace bene sciences. power to suffre spirituell t*ra*uaile benygnitees vertuous contemplacion. wiþstondyng' of temptacion and semblable þingges [456] of which forseide goodes certes it' is a ful grete foly a man to priden hym in eny of he*m* alle. [457]

Now as forto speke of goodes of nature. god wote þat somtyme [1]we han hem in nat*ure* as moche to *our* damage as to our p*rofit* [458] As forto speke of helþe of body: certys it passeþ ful liȝtly. and eke it is ful oft encheson of þe siknesse of þe saule for god wote þe flessh̄ is a ful grete enymye to þe soule And þerfore þe more þat a body is hool þe more be we *in* perile to falle [459] ¶ Eke forto p*ride* hym in his strenght of body it is an hie foly for certes þe flessh̄ coueiteþ aȝeinst þe spirit And ay þe more stronge þat þe flessh̄ is: þe sorier may þe saule be [460] ¶ And oueral þis strength̄ of body and worldly hardnesse causeþ ful often many men to perile and meschaunce [461] ¶ Eke forto p*ride* hy*m* of his gentrie is ful grete foly. ffor often tyme þe gentry of þe body. bygynneþ þe gentry of the saule And eke we bene al of oon fadere and al of oo modere. and al we be of oo nature roten and corrupte boþ riche and poor [462] ¶ fforsoþ a manere gentrie is to preise þat apparailleþ mannys corage wiþ vertues of moralitees and m̄akeþ hy*m* c*ristes* child [463] ¶ ffor tresteþ wel þat ouer what man þat synne haþ maistrie he is verrey cherle to synne.

[464] ¶ Nowe bene þere general þingges of gentilnesses. as schewyng of vices or ribawdry and s*er*uage of synne. in worde. in werk. in co*nten*a*un*ce [465] & vsyng vertu. Curtesie. and clennesse and to be liberal þat is to sayn / large by mesure. ffor þilk þat passen mesure is foly and synne [466] ¶ A noþer is to remembre hym of bounte þat he of o*þere* folk haþ receyued. [467] Ano*þere* is to be benigne of his sogette. wher-fore as seiþ Senek. Ther is no þinge more conable to a man of hie estate þan debonairte ¶ Senoca [468] ¶ And þerfore þise flies þat men / clepen bees whan þei maken her kynge þei chesen oon þat haþ no prikke wherwiþ he may stynge [469]

¶ Anoþer is a man to haue a noble hert' and a diligent' to atteyn to hie vertuous þingges [470* *see after* 474 *and Hengwrt and Petworth MSS.* . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] [471] ¶ Certes also who þat' p*r*ideþ hy*m* in þe goodes of fortune he is a ful grete fool. ffor somtyme is a man a ful grete lord' by þe morowe: þat' is a wrecche and a caytif er it' be nyght' [472] And somtyme þe [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] delites of a man ben cause of þe greuous malady þorgh̄ which̄ he dyeth̄ [473] Cert*es* þe co*m*mendacioñ of þe puple is somtyme ful fals and ful/ brutile forto trest'. This day þei preise to morowe þei blame. [474] God woote desire to haue co*m*mendaciōn eke of puple haþ caused deþe to mony a bisy man [*470] Now certys a man [1] to pride hym in goodes of *grace* is eke an out*rageous* foly for þilk' ȝiftes of grace þat' shuld haue turned hym to goodnesse and to medecyne. turneþ hym to venym and to confusioñ as seith seynt Gregor. [475] ¶ Now syþens þat' so is þat' ȝe han vnderstonden what is pride. and which̄ bene þe spices of it' and whennys pride sourdeþ and springeþ

¶ *gregorius*

[*The Remedy against Pride.*]

¶ **Remedi*um* *contra***
¶ **Super*b*iam**

[476] Now shal ȝe vnderstonde which̄ is þe remedy aȝeinst' pride. and þat' is hu*m*ilite or mekenesse [477] þat' is a vertue þorgh̄ which̄ a man haþ verrey ¶ knowlecch̄ of hym self and holdeþ of hy*m* self no pris ne deynte as in regarde of his deser*tes* consideryng' euer his freelte [478] ¶ Now bene þer thre maners of hu*m*ilite. as hu*m*ilite in hert' annoþer in mouþ / and þe iij. is i*n* werkes [479] ¶ The hu*m*ilite of herte is in iiij. maners. þat' oon is whan a man boldeþ hy*m*self as nouȝt' worþ by-fore god in heuene. Anoþer is whan he despiseþ

noon oþer man [480] ¶ The iij. is whan he rekketh nouȝt þoȝe / men holde hym nouȝt worþ ¶ The iiij. is whan he nys not sory of his hu*m*iliaciõn [481] ¶ Also þe hu*m*ilite of mouþ is in 4 þingges In attemprure speche and in humblesse of speche. And whan he byknoweþ wiþ his owne mouþ þat he is such as hym þenkeþ þat he is in his hert. Anoþer is whan he preiseþ þe bounte of anoþer man and noþeng þerof amenuseþ [482] hu*m*ilite ¶ Eke in werk is in 4. maners. The furst is whan he putteþ oþer men to-forn hy*m*. The secounde is to chese þe lowest place ouerall The iij. is gladly to assent to good cou*n*saile [483] ¶ The 4. is gladly to stonde to þe award of his souereyñ or of hym þat is hier in degre Certeyn þis is a grete werk of hu*m*ilite.

¶ De Peccato. Inuidie.

¶ De *i*nuidia :/

[484]
Aftere pride wil I speke of þe foule synne of envie which þat is as by þe word of þe philisophre sorow of o*per*e mannys prosp*er*ite And aftere þe word of seynt Austyne. it is sorowe of oþer mennes wele and Ioie of o*per* mennys harme [485] ¶ This foule synne is platly aȝeinst þe holy goost. al be it so þat euery synne be aȝeinst þe holy goost. ȝit for as moche as bounte app*er*teneþ p*ro*prely to þe holy goost. and envie co*m*meþ p*ro*prely of malice þerfore is p*ro*prely aȝenist þe bounte of þe holy goost [486] ¶ Now haþ malice ij. spices. þat is to sayn hardnes of herte. And wikkednesse or ellis þe flesshñ of a man is so blynde þat he [1]consideren not þat he is in synne [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] which is þe hardnesse of þe deuell [487] ¶ That oþere spice of envie is whan þat a man / werreþ trouþe whan þat he wote þat it is trouþe. And eke whan þat he werreieþ þe grace of þat god haþ ȝeue to his

neiȝboure. and al þis is by envie [488] Certes þan is envie þe worst' synne þat' is. ffor soþly al oþer synnes bene somtyme aȝein oo special vertue [489] But' certes envie is aȝeinst' alle vertues and of alle goodnesses for it' is sory of alle bountes of neighbo*ur*. and in þis manere it' is dyuers fro*m* alle maner synnes. [490] ffor wel vnneþes is þer eny synne þat' it' ne haþ som*me* delite in hy*m* self sauf only envie þat' euer haþ in [hym]self anguyssh̄ and sorowe [491] ¶ The spices of envie bene þise. þer is furst sorowe of oþer me*n*nys goodnesse and of her prosperite [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] is kyndely matere of Ioye. þan is enuye a synne aȝeinst' kinde. [492] ¶ The seconnde spice of envie is Ioie of oþer mennys harme. [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] [493] Of þis seconnde spice co*m*meþ bakbitynge [. . *no gap in the MS.*] or detraccioñ and þat haþ ij. spices as thus: ¶ Som*me* man preiseþ his neiȝbo*ur* by a wikked entent'. [494] for he makeþ alway a wikked knotte at' the last' ende. alwey he makeþ a but' at' þe last' ende. þat' is digne and more blame than worþe is al the plesinge [495] ¶ The seconnde spice is þat' if a man be good and doþ and saiþ a þinge to good entent' þe bakbiter wil turne al þe goodnesse vp so do*u*n to his schrewde entent' [496] ¶ The iij. is to amenuse þe bounte of his neighboure [497] ¶ þe .4. spice of bakbityng' is þis. þ*at'* if men speke goodnesse of a man wil þe bakkbyter sayn p*ar*fay such̄ a man ȝit' is bette þan he in dispreysinge of hym that' men preise [498] ¶ The .v. spice is forto consent' gladly harken þe harme þat' men speken of oþer folk'. þis synne is ful grete and ay encreseþ after þe wikked entent' of þe bakbiter [499] ¶ aftere bakbitynge co*m*meþ grucchynge or murmuraunce and somtyme it' springeþ of inpacience aȝeinst' god and somtyme aȝeinst man

[500] Aȝeinst' god it' is whan a man gruccheth aȝeinst þe peyn of helle or aȝeinst' pouert' or losse of cateH or aȝeinst reyne or tempest' or ellis gruccheþ þat' shrewes han prosperite. or ellis good men han aduersite. [501] and alle thise þingges shuld men suffre paciently. for þei commen by the riȝtful Iuggement' and ordinaunce of god [502] ¶ Somtyme [1] commeþ grucchinge of auarice as Iudas grucched aȝeinst þe Mawdelene whan she ennoynted þe hede of oure lorde Ihesu crist' wiþ her precious oynement' [503] This maner of murmur' is such as whan men grucchen of goodnesse and þat' men selue done er þat' oþer folk doon of her owne CateH [504] ¶ Somtyme commeþ murmur of pride / as whan symon þe phiryse grucched aȝeinst Maudeleyn. whan she approched to Ihesu crist' and wepte at' his fete for her synnes. [505] And somtyme it' sourdeþ to envie whan man diskeuereþ a mannys harme þat' was pryvey or bereþ hym / on honde þinge þat' is fals [506] ¶ Murmur' eke is oft' amonges seruauntes þat' grucchen whan her souereynes bidden / hem to doon leeful þingges. [507] and for as moche as þei dure not' openly say nay. ne wiþsaye the comaundementz of her souereyn̄. ȝit' wil þei saye harme and grucche and murmure priuely for verrey despite. [508] which̄ wordes men clepe þe deuels Pater noster. Thouȝe so be þat' þe deuel had neuere Pater noster. but' þat' folk' ȝeuen it' such̄ a name. [509] Somtyme it' commeþ of Ire or of prive hate þat' norssheth̄ rancour' in hert' as afterward̄ I shal declare. [510] þan commeþ eke bitternesse of hert' þorgh̄ which̄ bitternesse euery good dede of his neiȝbour' semeþ to hym bitter' and vnsauery [511] Than commeþ discord þat' vnbyndeþ al maner of frendship Than commeþ scornynge of [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] his neiȝbour' al doo he neuer so wel [512] ¶ Than commeþ accusinge as whan a man sekeþ occasion̄ to annoyen his

neighbour' whicħ þat' is like þe craft of þe deuel þat' waiteþ boþ nyȝt' and day to accusen vs alle [513] ¶ Than commeth malignite þorgħ whicħ a man annoyeþ his neighbour' prively if he may [514] And if he noȝt' ne may algate his wikked wille ne shal not' wante. as forto brenne his hous prively. or enpoysen or scleen / his beestes and semblable þingges

¶ **Remedium** *contra* **Inuidiam** [*from the margin*]

[515] ¶ Now wil I speke of þe remedie aȝeinst' þis foule synne of Envie ¶ ffirst' is þe loue of god principal and louyng' of hym self and of his neighbour. ffor soþly þat' oon ne may not' be wiþouten þat' oþer [516] And trust' wel þat' in þe name of þi neighbour' þou shalt' vnderstonde þe name of þi broþer ffor certes al we han oo fader flesshly. and oo Modere [1]that' is to say Adam and Eve and eke oo fadere spirituel þat' is to say god of heuene [517] Thine neiȝboure art' þou holden forto louen And willen hym al goodnesse and þerfore seiþ god loue þine neigbour' as þine self þat is to say to saluacioñ boþ of lif and of saule [518] And more ouer þou shalt' loue hym in word and benigne amonesynge and chastisynge and conforte hym in his anoyes and prey for hym wiþ al þine hert [519] ¶ And in/ dede þou shalt' loue hym in suchħ wise þat' þou shalt done to hym in charite as þow woldest' men did to þine owne persone. [520] & þerfore þow shalt' not' done hym no damage ne wikked worde ne harme in his body ne in his catel ne in his saule by entising' of wikked ensample. [521] þow shalt' not' desiren his wif ne noon / of his þingges ¶ Vnderstonde eke þat' in þe name of þi neighboure his comprehended his enemye. [522] Certes a man shal loue his enemye for þe comaundmentz of god And soþely þi frende shalt' þou loue in god. [523] I say þine Enemye shalt þou loue for goddis sake by his comaunde-

ment'. ffor if it' were reson þat' man shuld hate his enemye. forsoþ god wold' not' receyue vs to his loue þat' bene his enemyes [524] aȝeinst' iij manere of wrongges þat' his enemye doþ to hy*m* he shal do þre þingges as þus. [525] Aȝeinst hate and rancour of hert' he shal loue hym in hert'. Aȝeinst' chidynge and wikked wordes. he shal prey for his enemye. Aȝeinst' þe wikked dede of his enemye he shal doon hy*m* bounte [526] ffor crist' seiþ. Loueþ ȝoure enemyes and preieþ for hem þat' spekeþ ȝou harme And eke for hem þat' ȝou chasen and purswen and doth̄ bo*un*te to hem þat' yow haten ¶ Loo þus comaundeþ vs our lord Ihe*s*u crist' to doo to oure enemyes. [527] ffor soþly nature dryueþ vs to loue our frendes. And p*ar*fay oure enemyes han more nede to loue þan our frendes. and þei þat' more nede haue certes to hem shal men doo goodnes. [528] and certes in þilk' dede haue [we] remembraunce of þe loue of Ihe*s*u c*r*ist' þat' deyed for his enemyes. [529] And in as moche as þilk' loue is þe more greuous to p*er*fourme so moche is more grete þe merite And þ*er*fore the louyng' of our enemye haþ confounded þe venyme of þe deuell'. [530] ffor riȝt' as þe deuel is discomfited by hu*m*ilite riȝt' so is he wounded to the deep by þe loue of oure enemye [531] Certes þan' is loue þe medecyne þat' chaseth out þe ve[l]nym of Envie fro mannys herte [532] The spices of þis pas shullen be more largely declared in her chapiters folowinge

¶ **De Ira** : / [*from the margin*]

[533]

Aftere Envie wil I declare þe synne of Ire ffor soþly who þat' haþ Enuye vpon his neiȝbour' anoon comonly he wil fynde hy*m* matere of wreth̄ in worde or in dede aȝeinst' hym to whoom he haþ envie [534] And as wel co*m*meþ Ire of pride

as of enuye. ffor soþly he þat' is proude or envious is liȝtly wrooþ

[535] This synne of Ire aftere þe descriuynge of
¶ || Augustinus seint' Austyne is wikked wiH to bene auenged. by worde or by dede || [536] Ire aftere þis Philisophre is þe veruent' blood of man yquykked in his hert' þorgh which he wil / harme to hym þat' he hateþ. [537] ffor certes þe hert' of man. by eschawfynge and moovinge of his blood waxeþ so trouble þat' he is out' of aH Iugement' of resoun [538] ¶ But ȝe shullen / vnderstonde þat' Ire is in two maners þat' oon of hem is good and þat' oþer is wikked [539] The good is by Ialousie of goodnesse þorgh þe which a man is wroþe wiþ wikkednesse [. . . . *no gap in the MS.*]. And þer-
¶ sapiens./ for seith þe wise man þat' Ire is bette þan play [540] This Ire is with debonairete and it' is wrooþ wiþ-outen bitternesse not wroþ aȝeinst' þe man but' wrooþ wiþ þe mysdede of þe man. As seiþ þe prophete david **Irascimini & nolite peccare** [541] ¶ Now vnderstonde þat' wikked Ire is in two maners þat' is to seyn sodeyn Ire or hastif Ire wiþ-outen avisement' and consentynge of his resoñ [542] þe menyng' and þe sens of þis is þat' þe resoñ of a man ne consent' not' to þilk' sodeyn Ire and þan is it' venial [543] Anoþer Ire is ful wikked þat' commeþ of vilany of herte avised and cast' bifore wiþ wikked wiH to do vengeaunce and þerto his reson consenteþ. and so soþly þis is dedly synne [544] ¶ This Ire is so displesaunt to god þat' it troubleþ his hous and chaseþ þe holy goost' out' of manne saule [. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] [545] and putte in hym þe liknes of þe deueH and bynymmeþ þe man fro god þat' is his riȝtfuH lorde [546] This Ire is a ful grete plesaunce to þe deueH. for it' is þe deuels fornays þat' is eschauffed wiþ þe fuyre of helle. [547] ffor certes

as fuyre is more myȝty to distroye erþly þingges þan another element Riȝt so Ire is myȝty to destroye alle spirituel þingges. [548] Loke howe þat fire of smale gledys that bene almost dede vnder asshen wollen quyk[1]ke aȝein whan þei bene touched wiþ bremstone Riȝt soo Ire wil euermore quikke a-ȝein whan it is touched by pride þat is kered in mannys hert. [549] ffor certes fire may not come out of no þinge but if it were first in þe same þing naturelly as fire is drawen out of þe flyntes wiþ steele [550] And riȝt so as pride is often matere of Ire Right so is rancoure norssher and keper of þe [551] Ther is a maner of tree as seiþ seint Isodere þat whan men ¶ Isodre maken fire of þilk tree and keuereþ þe cooles of it with asshen soþly þe fuyre of it wil last last al a ȝere or more [552] ¶ And riȝt so fareþ it of rancour whan he is onys conceyued in þe hertis of somme men. Certeyne it wil last perauenture from oon / Ester day til anoþer day or more [553] But Certes þilk man is ful ferre from þe mercy of god al þilk while

[554] ¶ In þis forsaide deuels fornays þer foorgen. thre shrewes Pride þat alle bloweþ and encreseþe þe fire by pride and wikked wordes. [555] Than stant Envie and holdeþ þe hote yren vppon þe hertes of man wiþ a peire of longe tongges of longe Rancour [556] and þan stant þe synne of contynnynge or strif and þeest and bateren and forgeþ by vileyns reprouyngges [557] ¶ Certes þis cursed synne annoyeþ boþe þe man hym self and eke to his neighbour. ffor soþly al ¶ most al þe harme þat eny man doþe to his neighboure commeþ of wrath. [558] ffor certes outrageous wraþe doþ alle þat euer the deuel hym comaundeþ for he ne spareþ neiþer crist ne his swete modere [559] And in his outrageous angre & Ire allas allas ful mony one at þat tyme feleþ in his / herte ful wikkedly

boþ of crist' and of alH his halowes. [560] Is not' þis a cursed vice [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] his debonaire wif espirituelH þat' shulde kepen his saule [561] Certes it' bygynneþ eke goddys dieu lordship and þat' is mannys saule and þe loue of his neigbours It' striveþ eke alday aȝeinst' þe trouþe. It' reueþ hym þe quicte of his hert' and subuerteþ his saule

[562] ¶ Of Ire co*m*men þise stynkinge engendrures. ffirst' hate þat' is olde wreþe discord' þorgh which a man forsakeþ his olde frende þat' he haþ loued ful longe. [563] and þan co*m*meþ werre and euery manere of wronge þat man doth to his neighbour in body or in cateH [564] ¶ Of þis cursed. [1]synne of Ire co*m*meþ eke ma*n*nys sclaughtere And vnderstondeþ wel þat' homycide þat' is mannys sclauȝtere is in dyuers wise Some manere of Omycide is espirituel and som*me* is bodely. [565] Spirituel mannesslaughter is in vj. þingges ffirst' by hate as seiþ seint' Ioh̃n. That' he þat' hateþ his broþer is an homicide. [566] [Homicide] Is eke by bakbytinge. of whiche bakbiters seiþ salomon. þat' þei han. twoo swerdes with which þei scleen her neighbours. ffor soþly as wikked is to bynyme his good name as his liff [567] ¶ Omycide is eke in ȝeuynge of wikked counsaile by fraude as forto ȝeue / counsaile to array wikkedly custumes and taliages [568] Of which seiþ Salomon ¶ lyoun rorynge. bere hungry bene like to cruel lordshippes in wiþholding' or a-breggynge of þe Shepe or þe hire of þe wages of [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] þe almesse of poor folk' [569] ffor which þe wise man seiþ ffedeþ hy*m* þat' almost dieþ for hunger. for soþly but' þou fede hym þou scleest' hy*m*. and alle þise bene dedly synnes [570] Bodyly mansclaunter is whan þou scleest' hym wiþ þi tunge in oþe*re* manere as whan þou comaundest' to sclene a man or ellis ȝeuest' hym counsaile to scleen a

¶ Iohannes.

¶ Salomon

¶ Idem

man. [571] Mansclaughtere in dede is in foure maners That' oon is by lawe Riȝt as a Iustice dampneþ hym þat' is copable to þe deeþ But' lat' þe Iustise be ware þat' he do it' riȝtfully. and þat' he do it' not' for delit' to spille bloode. but' for riȝtwisnesse. [572] Anoþere homycide is doon for necessite as whan a man sleeþ anoþer in his defendaunt' and þat' he may noon oþer wise eskape for his owne deþe. [573] But' certeynly if he may eskape wiþout' sclaughter' of his aduersary and sleþe hym he doþ synne and he shal bere penaunce as for dedly synne [574] ¶ Eke if a man by caas or auenture shete an arowe or cast' a stone wiþ whiche he sleeþ a man it' is homycide [575] ¶ Eke if a womman by necligence ouerleiþ her childe in sclepinge it' is homycide. and dedly synne. [576] Eke whan a man distourbeþ concepcion of a childe or makeþ a womman barayn by drynkinge of venemous herbes þorgh which she may not' conceyue or sleeþ a childe by drynkes or ellis putteþ in certeyn material þingges in her secre places to sle þe child [577] or ellis doþ vnkinde synne by which man or wom[1]man shedeþ his nature in manere or in place þer as a childe may not' be conceyued or ellis if a womman haþ conceyued and hurte he[r] self and sleeþ her childe ȝit' is it' homycide [578] ¶ What' say we eke of wommen þat' Mordren her children for drede or worldly shame certes an horrible homicide [579] Homicyde is eke if a mon approcheþ to a womman by desire of leccherie þorghe which þe childe is pershed or ellis smyteþ a womman witingly þorgh which she leseþ her childe alle þise bene homycides and horrible dedly synnes / [580] ȝit' commeþ þerof Ire and mony moo synnes as wel in worde as in þouȝt' and in dede as he þat' aretteþ vpon god or blameþ god of þinge of which he is hym self gilty or dispiseþ god and alle his halowes as done þise cursed hasardours

in dyuers cuntrees. [581] þis cursed synne doon þei whan þei felen in her hert' ful wikkedly of god and his halowes [582] ¶ Also whan þei treten vnreuerently þe sacrament' of þe autere Thilk' synnes is so grete þat' vnneþes may it' be relesed but' þat' mercy of god passeþ his werkes it' is so grete and he so benigne. [583] Than commeþ of Ire attry Angre whan a man [is] sharpely amonased. in his shrift to forlete synne [584] þan wil he be angry and answere hokerly and angerly or defende and excuse his synne by vnstedfastnesshe of his flessh̄ or ellis he did it' forto holde company with wise felawes. or ellis he seiþ þe fende entised / hym [585] or ellis he did it' for his ȝouþe. or ellis complexioñ is so corragious that' he may not' forbere. or ellis it' is his destanye as he seiþ vnto a certeyn age. or ellis he seiþ hit' commeþ hym of gentilnesse of his owncestres and semblable þingges [586] ¶ Alle þise manere folkes so wrappen hem in her synnes þat' þei ne wol not' delyuere hem self. Soþly no wiȝt' þat' excusel hym wilfully of his / synne may not' be delyuered of her synne til þat' he mekely byknoweþ his synne [587] ¶ Aftere þat' commeþ sweringe þat' is expresse aȝeinst' þe comaundement' of god. and þis bifalleþ oft' of anger and of Ire [588] God seiþ þou shalt not' take þe name of þi lorde god in veyn nor in ydeH ¶ Also our lorde Ihesu crist' seiþ by þe word' of seynt' Mathewe [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] [589] Ne wil ȝe not' swere in al manere. Neiþer by heuene for it' is goddes trone. ne by þe erþe for it' is þe benche of his fete [1]ne by Ierusalem for it' is þe cite of a grete kynge Ne by þine hede. for þou maist' not' make an heer white ne blak' [590] But' seiþ by ȝour' ȝee ȝee. and nay nay and what' þat' is more it' is eueH þus seith crist' [591] ¶ ffor cristes sake ne swereþ not' so synfully in dismembringe of crist' by soule

¶ Textus

¶ Matheus

herte bonys and body for certes it semeþ þat ȝe
þenk þat þe cursed Iwes ne dismenbred / hym nouȝt
ynouȝe þe precious persone of crist But ȝe dismembren
hym more [592] And if so be þat þe lawe com-
pelle ȝou to / swere þan rewleþ ȝou after þe lawe of
god in ȝoure sweryng as seiþ Ieremye 4to. capitulo.
[. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] Thou ¶ Ieremie quarto capitulo
shalt kepe thre condicions. Thou shalt swere in trouþe
in doom and in riȝtwisnesse [593] This is to sayn ¶ Iurabis in veritate in iudicio et iustitia [*same side-note and quotation in the Sompnour's Tale. MS. leaf 219, back*]
þou shalt swere sooþ. for euery lesinge is aȝeinst crist
ffor crist is verrey trouþe And þenk wel þis þat
euery grete swerer not compelled lawfully to swere
þe wounde shal not departe fro his hous þe whiles he
vseth such vnlieful sweringe [594] ¶ Thow shalt swere
eke in doom whan þow arte constrayned by þi domes
man to witnesse þe trouþe [595] ¶ Eke þou shalt
not swere for envie ne for fauour ne for mede
but for riȝtwisnesse for declarynge to
worship of god and in helping of þine euen-
cristen [596] And þerfore euery man þat
takeþ goddis name in ydel or falsely swereþ wiþ
his mouþ or ellis takeþ on hym þe name of crist
to be called a cristen man and lyueþ aȝeinst cristes
lyuyyng and his techinge alle þei taken goddes name
in ydel [597] ¶ Loke eke what seiþ seint Petere ¶ Petrus. /
Actus 4°. Non est aliud nomen sub cœlo. Ther
nys noñ oþer name seiþ seint Peter vnder heuene yȝeuen
to men in whiche þei mote be saued þat is to
seyn but in þe name of Ihesu crist [598] ¶ Take kepe eke
how þat þe precious name of Ihesu crist as seiþ seynt paule
Ad philipenses 2° In nomine Ihesu &cetera. That in þe ¶ Ad philipenses
name of Ihesu euery knee of heuenly creatures or
erþly or of helle shuld bowen for it is so hiȝe
and so worshipful that þe cursed fende in helle shuld
tremblee to heren it nempned [599] than
semeþ it þat men þat sweren / so horribly by his

blessed name þat þei dispisen it more boldely þan did þe cursed Iwes. or ellis þe deuel þat trembleþ whan he hereþ his name

[600] ¶ Now certes siþens þat swerynge but it be doo al lawfully is holy defended me The wors is forswering falsly. and ȝit nedelees.

[601] What say [1]we eke of hem þat deliten hem in swerynge and holden it a gentrye or a manly dede to swere grete oþes And what of hem þat of verrey vsage ne cessen not to swere grete oþes al þe cause not worþ oon strawe Certes þis is horrible synne [602] swering sodeynly wiþ-out avisement is eke a synne [603] ¶ But lat vs nowe goo to þilk horrible and cursed / swerynge of adiuracioñ and coniuracioñ as doñ þise fals enchauntours or nigromanciens in basyns ful of water or in a briȝt swerde. in a sercle or in a fuyre or in a shulder bone of a shepe [604] I can not seyn but þat þei doon cursedly and ¶ dampnably aȝeinst crist and al þe feiþ of holy c̃hurc̃h.

[605] What say we of hem þat byleuen on dyuynales as by fliȝt or by noys of briddes or of beestes or of sorte by Egrimauncye. by dremes. by chirking of doores by gnewyng of rattye or crakinge of howses and such maner wrecchednesse [606] Certes al þis thynge is defended by god and by holy churche for // which þei bene acursed to þei come to amendement þat on such filþe setten her byleue [607] ¶ Charmes for woundes and maladies of men or of beestes if þei taken eny effecte it bene perauenture þat god suffreþ it for folk shuld ȝeue þe more faiþe and reuerence to his name

[608] ¶ Now wil I speke of lesyngges which generally is fals signyfiaunt or woord in entent to deceyuen his euen cristen [609] ¶ Some lesing is of which þer commeþ noon auauntage to no wiȝt and somme lesyng turneþ to þe ease eiþer profit of a man and to

damage of a noþ*er* man [610] A noþere lesing is for to saue his liff or his cateH. Anoþ*er* lesynge co*m*meþ of delit' forto lye In which delite þei willen / forge a longe tale and peynte it' wiþ alH circu*m*stannces. wher alle þe grounde of þe tale is fals [611] ¶ Some lesynge co*m*meþ for he wil sustene his word and some lesing' co*m*meth of recchelessnesse w*ith*-outen avisement' and Semblable þingg*es*

[612] ¶ Lat' vs nowe touche þe vice of fflaterie which ne co*m*meþ not' gladly but' for drede or for coueityse. [613] fflatery is generally wrongfuH presinge. fflaterers bene þe deuel norrces þat norsheþ his chylldren wiþ mylk of losengry. [614] ffor soþ seiþ Salomon: ¶ Salomon. þat' flaterie is wors þan detracciōn. ffor. somtyme detraccioñ makeþ an haunteyn man be þe more humble. ffor he dredeþ detraccioñ But' certes fflaterye makeþ a man to vn[1]haunten his hert' and his counten*aun*ce [615] ¶ fflaterers bene þe deuels Enchaunters for þei make a man to wene of hym self be like þat' he nys not' like [616] Thei bene like Iudas þat' bytraied [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] a man to selle hy*m* to his enemye þat' is to þe deueH [617] ¶ fflaterers bene þe deuels Chapileyns þat' synggen euer Placebo [618] I rekken flaterye in þe vices of Ire. ffor oft tyme if a man be wrooþ wiþ a-noþere þan wil he flater some wiȝt' to susteyne hym in his quereH

[619] Speke we now of such cursyng' as co*m*meþ out' of yrous herte ¶ Malisouñ may be seide generally Euery maner power of harme such cursyng' byreueþ man fro þe regne of god. as seiþ seynt' paule [620] And oft' ¶ Paulus. / tyme such cursing' wrongfully retourneth aȝein to hym þat' curseþ as a brid retourneþ aȝein to his owne nest' [621] And ouer al þing' men ouȝt' eschewe to curse her children and ȝeue to þe deueH her engendrure as ferforþ as in hem is ¶ Certes it' is a grete perile and grete synne.

[622] Lat' vs þan speke of chidynge and reproche
whicħ bene grete woundes in mannys hert ffor
þei vnsewen þe semes of ffrendship in mannys hert'.
[623] ffor certes vnneþes may a man pleynly ben
accorded wiþ hym þat' haþ hy*m* openly revyled and
reproued and disclaundred þis is a ful grisly synne
¶ Text*us*./ ¶ And c*rist*' seiþ in þe gospeH [624] ¶ And take kepe nowe
þat' he þat' reprouеþ his neighbour eiþere he reprouеþ
hy*m* by som harme of peyne þat' he haþ on his body.
as meseH croked harlot' or by some synne þat' he doþ
[625] ¶ Now if he reproue hym by harme of peyn
þan turneþ þe prophete to Ih*es*u Crist'. ffor peyne is
sent' by þe riȝtwis sonde of god and by his suffraunce
be it' meselrye or maym or maladie [626] *and* if he
reproue hym vncharitably of synne as þou hullo*ur* þou
dronklewe harlot' and so forþ þat appe*r*teneþ þat
to þe roioysyng' of þe deueH þat' euer haþ ioye
þat' men doñ synne [627] ¶ And certes chyding' may
not' come but' of vileyns hertes. ffor after þe
habundaunce of þe hert' spekeþ þe mouþ ful oft'
[628] And ȝe shullen vnderstonde þat' loke by eny way
whan eny man shal chastise a noþer þat' he be ware
fro chydyng' or reprouynge ffor trewly but' he be
ware he may ful liȝtly quykken þe fyre of angre and of
wretth whicħ þat' he shuld' quenche. and p*er*auenture
sleeþ [1]him þat' he myȝt' chastise wiþ benyg-
¶ Salomon./ nyte [629] ¶ ffor as seiþ Salomon ¶ The amyable tunge is
þe tree of lif þat' is to saye of lif spirituel. and
a disselaue tunge sleeþ þe spirit' of hym þat'
reprouеþ and eke of hym þat' is reproued [630] ¶ Loo
¶ Aug*ustinus*./ what' saiþ seint' Austyñ ¶ Ther nys no þinge ylike þe
¶ Paulus./ deuels child' as he þat' oft' chideþ ¶ Seynt Poule seiþ
eke ¶ I þe Seru*aun*te of god by-houeþ not' to chide. [631] and
howe þat' chydyng' is a vileyns þinge bytwix al
manere folk. ȝit' is it' certes most' vnco*n*nable
by-twix a man and his wiff. for þer nys neuer rest'

¶ And *per*for seiþ Salomon ¶ An hous þat' is vnkeuered ¶ Salomon.
in reyn and dropping' and a chidyng' wiff bene ylike
[632] a man þat' is in a dropping hous in mony
places. they hee eschewe þe dropping' in oon place
it' droppeþ on hy*m* in a noþer place ¶ So fareþ it' be
a chiding wiff. but' she chide hym in' oo place she
wol chide hy*m* in anoþ*er* [633] And þerfore better is ¶ Idem.
a morsel of brede with Ioye þan an hous ful of
delices wiþ chidynge seiþ Salomon [634] ¶ And
poule seiþ O ȝe wo*m*men be ȝe subiectys to ȝoure ¶ Paulus./
husbondes as byhoueþ in god. And ȝe men loueþ ȝoure
wyves. Ad colonisenses .3°.

[635] ¶ Afterward speke we of scornynge which is a
wikked synne And namely whan he scorneþ a man for
his good werkes. [636] for certes suche scorners
faren like þe foule tode þat' may not' endure to
smell þe swete sauour of þe vyne what' it'
florssheþ [637] ¶ Thise scorners bene partyng' felawes
wiþ þe deuell. for þei han Ioie whan þe deuel
wynneþ and sorowe whan he leseþ [638] ¶ They bene
adu*er*saries to Ih*es*u crist' for þei haten þat' he loueþ
þat' is to say sauacioñ of saule

[639] ¶ Speke we nowe of wikked counsaille. ffor he þat'
wikked counsaille ȝeuethñ is a traitour. ffor he disceyueþ
hym þat' trusteþ in hy*m* Vt' Achitofel de Absolonem
¶ But' naþelees ȝit' is it' wikked counsaile ffirst' aȝeinst' hym
self [640] for as seiþ þe wise man Euery fals
lyuyng' haþ his p*ro*pre in hym self þat' he þat'
wiłł anoy anoþer man he annoyeþ furst' hym self.
[641] And men shullen vnderstonde þat man shal not'
take his counsaille of fals folk ne of to angry folk or
greuous folk' ne of folk þat' louen specialy to moche her owne
profite ne to moch worldly folk namely in counsailling'
of saules

[642] ¶ Now co*m*meþ þe synne of hem þat'
maken discorde amonges / folk which is a synne þat'

crist' hateþ vtterly and no wonder is. ffor he deyed forto make concorde. [643] And more shame done þei to crist' [1]þan did þei þat' hy*m* crucified' ffor god loueþ better þat' frendship be amonges folk' [1]þan he did his owne body þe which he ȝaf for vnitees. therfore bene þei likned to þe deuel þat' euer is about' to make discord'

[644] ¶ Now co*m*meþ þe synne of double tunge. such as speken faire to-fore folk and wikkedly behynde or ellis þei / maken semblaunt' as þouȝe þei speken of good entencioñ or ellis in game and pley and ȝit' þei speke of wikked entent

[645] ¶ Now co*m*meþ bywreying' of counsaille þorgh which a man is defamed vnneþes may he restore þe damage

[646] ¶ Now co*m*meþ manace þat' is an open foly ffor he þat' open manaseþ he treteþ more þan he may p*er*forme ful often tyme

[647] ¶ Now co*m*meþ ydel wordes þat' is wiþ-outen profite of hym þat' spekeþ þe wordes. *and* eke of hym þat' harkeneþ þoo wordes // or ellis ydel wordes. ben / þoo þat' bene nedelees or wiþ-outen entent' of naturel profite. [648] and al be it' þ*at*' ydel wordes be somtyme venial synne ȝit' shuld' men doute hem. for we shullen ȝeue rekenyng' of hem to-fore god

[649] ¶ Now co*m*meþ Iangelynge þat' may not' come wiþ-
¶ Salomon oute synne. And as seiþ Salomon ¶ It' is signe of a-pert' foly [650] and þerfor a philisophre seide whan a man asked hy*m* how men shulde plese þe puple. And he answerd' to mony good werkes and speke fewe Iangelynggs

[651] ¶ After þis co*m*meþ þe synne of Iapes. þat' bene deuels apes. for þei maken folk to lauȝe at' her Iaprie as folkes doon at' þe gaudes of an ape. Suche Iapes defendeþ seint' Poule [652] ¶ Loke how þat' vertuous wordes and hooly conforten hem

þat' travaillen in þe seruise of criste Riȝt' so conforten þe vileyns words and knakkes of Iapers hem *þat'* trauaillen in þe servise of þe deueH [653] ¶ Thise bene þe synnes / þat' commen of þe tunge þat' co*mm*en of Ire and of other synnes

[*Remedies against Ire.*]

[654] ¶ The remedye aȝeinst' Ire is a vertue þat' men clepen mansuetude þat' is debonairete and eke a nother vertue *þat* men clepe pacience [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]

[655] ¶ Debonairte wiþdroweþ and refreyneþ þe styryngges and þe meuyngs of mannys corage in his hert' and such manere þat þei ne skippe not' out' by anger ne by Ire [656] suffraunce suffreþ swetly al þe annoyaunces and þe wrongges þat' men doon to a man outward [657] ¶ Seint' Ierom seiþ þus of debonairte ¶ Iero*nimus* þat' hit' dooþ noon harme to no wiȝt' ne seiþ for noon harme þat' men hy*m* done ne sayn He ne eschaungeþ nouȝt' aȝeinst' his resoñ. [658] This vertue som / [1] somtyme co*mm*eþ of nature ¶ ffor as seiþ þe philisophre. A man is a quyk þinge by nature. debonaire and treteable by goodnes But' whan debonairte is enfourmed by grace. it is þe more worþ

[659] ¶ Pacience þat' is anoþer remedye aȝeinst' Ire is a vertue þat' suffreþ swetely euery mannys goodnesse and is not' worþ for non harme þat' is doon to hy*m* [660] ¶ The philisofre seiþ þat' pacience is þilk vertue þat' suffreþ debonairly aH þe outrages of aduersite and euery wikked worde. [661] This vertue makeþ a man like to god. and makeþ hym his owne dere childe as seiþ crist'. This vertu discomfiteþ þine enemye And perfore seiþ þe wise man If þou wilt venquyssh þine / ennemye. lerne to suffre [662] And þou shalt' vnderstonde þat a / man suffreth four maner

of greu*au*nce in outward' þingges. aȝeinst which foure he mote haue iiij. maners of paciences./

[663] ¶ The furst greu*au*nce is of wikked wordes. þilk greu*au*nce suffreþ Ih*es*u crist' wiþ-outen grucchinge ful paciently whan þe Iwes despised hym and reproueden hy*m* ful oft' [664] Suffre þou þerfore paciently. ffor þe wise man eke seiþ ¶ If þou stryue wiþ a fool þoughe þe fool be wroþ. or þouȝe he lauȝe algate þou shalt' haue no rest. [665] That' oþer greu*au*nce outward' is forto haue damage of þi cate ¶ Ther aȝeinst' suffred crist' ful paciently whan he was dispoilled of al þat' he had in this liff and þat' nas but' his cloþes [666] ¶ The iij. greu*au*nce is a man to haue harme in his bodye. and þat' suffred crist' ful paciently in al his passion [667] ¶ The iiij. greu*au*nce is in an outrageous labour' i*n* werkes. wherfore I say þat' folk þat' maken her seru*au*ntes to travaille to greuously or out' of tyme as in holy days. soþly þei doon grete synne. [668] Here aȝeinst' suffred crist' ful paciently and taught' vs patience whan he bare vpon / his blessed shulder' þe crois vpon which he shuld' suffre dispitous deeþ. [669] Here may men lerne to be pacient'. ffor soþly not' oonly cristen men bene pacient' for þe loue of Ih*es*u crist' and for guerdon of þe blisse of heuene and of þe blisful liff þat' is p*er*durable But' certes þe olde paynyms þat' neuere were cristen co*m*menden & vseden þe vertue of pacience

¶ Sap*iens*

¶ Phil*osophus*

[670] A philisophre vpon a tyme þat' wold' haue beten his disciple for his grete trespace. for which he was gretly ameued and brouȝt' a ȝeerd' to scoure þe [1] childe [671] and whan þe childe segh þe ȝeerde he seide to his maist*er* what' wil ȝe doo. I wil bete þe quod his maistere. for þine correctiou*n*. [672] ffor soþ quod þe childe ȝe ouȝt' first' correcte ȝoure self' þat' haþ lost' ȝoure pacience for þe gilt' of a childe. [673] ffor soþ quod þe maister al wepinge þu

saiest' þe sooþ. Haue þou þe ȝerde my dere sone and correcte me for myn Inpacience [674] ¶ Of pacience commeth obedience þorgh which a man is obedien to crist' and into alle hem to which he ouȝt' be obedient' in crist' [675] and vnderstonde wel þat' obedience is parfite whan men doon gladly and hastely wiþ good hert' entierly al þat' he shuld do. [676] Obedience / generally is to perfourme þe doctrine of god *and* of his souereins to whiche hym ouȝte to bene obeysaunt' in al riȝtwisnesse

¶ **De peccato accidie** [*from margin*]

[677]
Aftere þe synnes of Envie I wil speke of þe synne of Accidie. ffor Envie blyndeþ þe hert' of a man. And Ire troubleth a man. and accidy makeþ hym hevye þouȝtful and wrowe [678] ¶ Envie and Ire maken bitternesse in hert' which bitternesse is / modere of accide and bynymeþ hym þe loue of al goodnes þat' is accyde þe angwissh of a trouble hert' and seynt' Austyne seiþ it' is anoye of goodnesse and anoy of harme. [679] / Certes þis is a dampnable synne for it' dooþ wronge to Ihesu crist' in as moch as he nymeþ þe seruice þat' men ouȝt' to doo Ihesu crist' wiþ al diligence as seiþ salomon / ¶ Salomon./
[680] But' accide dooþ noon suche diligence He doþ al þing' wiþ anoy and wrawnesse sclaknesse and escusaciōn and wiþ dulnesse and vnlust' ¶ ffor which þe booke seiþ. Accursed be he þat' doþ þe seruise of god negligently [681] Than is accidy enmye to euery estate of man for certes þe estate of man is in þre maners. [682] eiþer It' is þe estate of Innocence as was þe estate of Adam byforn þat' he felle in to synne in which estate he was halden to wirche as in heryng' and in adourynge of god [683] ¶ Anoþer estate is þe estate of synful men in which estate men ben halden

to labour in preying' to god for amendement' of her [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] synnes [684] ¶ Anoþer estate is þe estate of grace in whicħ estate he is halden to do werkes of penitence and certes to aħ þise þingges is accidye / enemye and contrary for he loueþ no bysynes at' aħ [685] ¶ Now certes þis foule synne accidye is eke a ful gret' enemye to þe liflode of þe body for it' haþ no *p*urvya*u*nce [1] aȝeinst' temporel necessite ffor it' is for-slewþe and for-sluggeþ and distroieþ al good temporels by rechelesnesse

[686] The iiij. þinge is þat' accidie is like hem þat' bene in þe peyne of helle by cause of her sclouþe and of her heuynesse. for þei þat' bene dampned bene so bounde þat' þei ne may wel do ne wel þenk'. [687] Of accidy co*m*meþ first' þat' a man is anoied and enco*m*bred to doon eny goodnesse and makeþ þat' god haþ abhomynacioñ of such accidye as seith seynt' Ioħn

¶ *sanctus* Io*h*a*n*ne*s*./

[688] ¶ Now co*m*meþ scleuthħ þ*a*t' wil not' suffre noon hardnesse ne no penaunce ffor soþ sclouþe is so tendere and so delicate as seiþ Salomon þat' he wil not' suffre noon hardnesse ne pen*au*nce and þerfore he sheendeþ aħ þat' he dooþ [689] aȝeinst' his roten herted synne of accidie and sclouþe shulde men ex*er*cise by hem self to done good werkes and manly and vertuousli cacchen corage wel to done þenkyng' þat' our lorde Ih*es*u crist' quiteþ euery good dede be it' neuere so lite./ [690] Vsage of labour is a grete þing' for it' makeþ as seiþ Seynt' Bernard þe laborers to haue stronge armes and harde Synewes and sclouthe makeþ hem feble and tendere [691] Than co*m*meth drede forto bygynne to wirkes ffor certes he þat' is enclyned / to synne hym þenkeþ it' is so grete an emprise forto vndertake to do werkes of goodnesse [692] [. . . . . .

¶ Salomon

¶ Bernard*us*

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

. . . *no gap in the MS.*] as seiþ Seint' *gregorie*.

[693] ¶ Now co*m*meþ wanhope þat' is despeire of þe mercy of god þat' co*m*meþ somtyme of to mocħ outrageous sorowe and somtyme of moche drede ymagynynge þat' he haþ do so mocħ synne þat' it' wil not' auaille hy*m* þouȝe he wolde repent' hym and forsake synne and doon good [694] þorȝe whicħ dispeire or drede he boundeneþ his hert' to euery man*er* synne as seiþ seint' Austyne [695] ¶ Whicħ dampnable synne if þat' it' contynue vnto his ende. it' is cleped synnyng' in þe holy goost' [696] This orible synne is so p*er*ilous þat' he þat' is despeired þer nys no felonye ne no synne þat' he douteþ for to doo as shewed wel by Iudas [697] Certes þen abouen aH synnes is þis synne most' displesaunt' to crist' and most' aduersarie to crist'. [698] Soþly he þat' dispeireþ he is like þe cowardħ champioñ recreaunt' and seiþ creaunt' wiþouten nede Allas / alas / nedelees is he recreaunt' [1]and seiþ creaunt'[1] and nedeles / despeired [699] ffor certes þe mercy of god is euer redy to þe penytent. it' is abouen aH his werkis [700] ¶ Allas can a man not' [2]vmbyþenke hy*m* of þe gospel of Luke xv°. Where as crist seiþ þat' as wel shal þer be ioye in heuene vpon a synful / man þat' doþ penytence þan vppon 90. 19.Riȝtful men þat' [. . . . *no gap in the MS.*] neden to penytence [701] ¶ Loke forþer in þe gospeH þe Ioye and / þe feestes of þe good man þat' had lost' his / sone. Whan his sone wiþ repentaunce was retourned to his fadere. [702] Can / þei not' remembre hem eke þat' as seiþ seint' luc*a* xxiii°. Hou þat' þe þeef þat' was honged besides Ih*es*u cristes side ¶ Lord remembre on me whan þou co*m*mest into þi regne. [703] ffforsoth seide crist' to day shalt' þou be wiþ me in p*a*radys [704] Certes *þer* nys noon so horrible synne of

¶ Aug*ustinu*

[1—1 *repeated MS.*]

¶ Luc*æ* xxv°.

¶ Luc*e* xxiij°

man þat' it' ne may in his lif be destroied by penytence
þorgh vertue of þe passio*u*n and of þe deeþ of crist'
[705] ¶ Allas what' nedeþ man þan to be despeired
siþens his mercy so redy is to aske and haue
[706] ¶ þan / co*m*meþ sompnolence þat' is scluggy
sclumbringe which makeþ a man be hevie and dulle in
body and in saule and þis synne co*m*meþ of scloupe
[707] And certys þe tyme þat' by way of resoñ men
shuld not' sclepe þat' is by þe morowe but' if þer were
cause resonable [708] ¶ ffor soþly in þe morowe tyde is
most' conable a man to say his preiers and for-
to þenken on god. and to honouren god and to
ȝeuen almesse to þe poor þat' first' co*m*men in þe name
¶ Salomon. of criste [709] ¶ Lo what' seiþ Salomon. who so wil
by þe morowe awake to seke me. he shal fynd*e*
[710] ¶ Than co*m*meth necligence or rechelesnesse
þat' rekketh of no þinge and how þat' ignoraunce is
modere of al harme ¶ Certes necligence is þe norice.
[711] necligence ne doþ no force whan he shal done
eny þinge whedere he do it' wel or badly

[712] ¶ Of þe remedie of þise two synnes as seiþ
¶ sapi*ens* þe wise / man þat' he þat' dredeþ god spareþ not'
to don*e* þat' hym ouȝt' to done [713] and he þat' loueþ
god. he wil do diligence to plese. god by his werkes
and abounden hym self wiþ al his myȝt' wel forto doon.
[714] þan co*m*meþ ydelnes þat' is þe ȝate of al
harmes. An ydel man is like to a place þat' haþ no
walles þe deueH may entre on euery side or shete
at' hy*m* at' discouerte by temptacioñ on euery side
[715] This ydelnesse is þe thurrok' of al wikked and
vyleyns þouȝtes. and of all*e* Iangelingg*es* trowfuls and
al ordure [716] ¶ Certes þe heuene is yȝeue to hem þat'
¶ d*auid* wil laboure. and nouȝt' to ydel folk' ¶ Eke d*auid* [1] seiþ
þat' þei ne be not' in þe labour of men. ne þei shul
not be whipped wiþ men þat' is to say in purgatorie

[717] ¶ Certes þan semeþ it'. þei shul be tormented wiþ þe deuel in helle but' if þei done penitence

[718] ¶ Than commeþ þe synne þat' men clepen tarditas as was a man is so lattred and so tarying' er he wil turne to god. and certes þat' is a grete foly. he / is like hym þat' falleþ in þe diche and wil not' arise. [719] And / þis vice commeþ of fals hope. þat' he þenkeþ he shal lyue longe. but' þat' hope failleth ful oft'

[720] Than commeth lacchesse þat' is he þat' whan he bygynneþ eny good werk. anoon / he wil forlete it' and stynt'. as done þei þat' han eny wiȝt to gouerne and ne taken of hym no more kepe anoon as þei / fynden eny contrary or eny anoye [721] ¶ Thise ben þe newe shipardes þat' laten her shepe wetyngly go rennen to þe / wolf þat' is in þe breres or doon no force of her owne gouernaunce [722] ¶ Of þis commeþ pouerte and distruction boþ of spirituel and of temporel þingges. Than commeth a manere of coldnesse þat' freseþ aH þe hert' of a man [723] ¶ Than commeth vndeuocioñ þorghe which a man is so blent'. And as seiþ seint' Bernard haþ such langour in ¶ Bernardus soule þat' he may neiþere rede ne synge in holy church ne þenk on deuocioñ ne travaille wiþ his hondes in no good werk þat' it' ne is / to hym vnsauery and al appalled [724] þan wexeþ he sore and / sclowe and slumbry and sone wil be wrooþ and sone is / enclyned to hate and to Envie [725] ¶ Than commeþ þe synne of worldly sorowe. which þat' is cleped tristicia þat' sleeþ a ¶ Tristicia man. as seiþ seint' Paule [726] ffor certes such sorowe wirkeþ to þe deeþ of þe saule and of þe body ¶ Also for þerof commeth þat a man is annoyed of his owne liff [727] Wherfore such sorowe shorteþ ful often þe lyf // of a man er þat' his tyme commen is by way of kinde

[*The Remedy against Accidie.*]

[728] ¶ Aȝeinst þis horrible Synne of Accide and þe braunches of þe same Ther is a vertue þat is called ffortitudo or strenght þat is an affeccioñ þorgh which a man despiseþ al noyous þinge [729] ¶ This vertue is so myȝty and so vigorous: þat it dar wiþstonde myȝtely and wrastel aȝeinst þe Sawtes of þe deueH and wisly kepen hym self fro periles þat bene wikked [730] for it enchaunseþ and enforseþ þe soule [1] riȝt as accidy abateþ it and makeþ it feble. ffor þis fortitudo may endure by longe suffraunce þe travailes þat bene conable

¶ ffortitudo./

[731] ¶ This vertue haþ mony spyces ¶ The furst is cleped magnanimitas. þat is to / saye grete corage. ffor soþly þer byhoueþ grete corage aȝeinst Accidye lest þat it swelowe þe soul by þe sy*n*ne of sorowe. or destroy it by wanhope. [732] This vertu makeþ folk vndertake harde þingges. and greuous þingg*es* by her owne wille wisely and resonably [733] And for as moch as the deuel fighteþ aȝeinst man. more by queynteyse & by scleight þan by strenghth *þer*fore a man shal withstond*e* hym by witte and by resoñ and by discreccioñ [734] ¶ Then ben / þer þe vertues of feiþ and hope in god *and* in his seyntes to atcheuen and accomplise þe good werkes in which he p*u*rposeþ feermely to contynue [735] ¶ Than co*m*meþ suerte or sikernesse and þat is whan a man ne douteþ no travaile in tyme co*m*mynge of þe good werk þat a man / haþ bygonne [736] ¶ Than co*m*meþ Magnificence. and þat is to sayn whan a man doþ and p*er*fourmeþ grete werkes of goodnesse þat he haþ bygonne. and þat is þe ende whi þat men shuld doo good werkes. ffor in þe acco*m*plesing of good werkes lith þe grete guerdo*un* [737] ¶ Than is þer constaunce þat is stablenesse of corage and þis shulde be in hert by stedfast feiþ and in mouþe and in

berynge and in chere and in dede [738] ¶ Eke þer bene moo / special þingges and remedies aȝeinst Accidie in dyuers werkes and in consideracions of þe pyne of helle and of þe Ioye of heuene and in þe trust' of þe grace of þe holy goost' þat' wil ȝeuen hym myȝt to perfourmen his entent'

¶ De auaricia.

[739]

Aftere Accidie wil I speke of avarice and of couetytise of which synne seiþ seint' Poule þat' þe Roote of all synne is coueitise ¶ And Thimothei 2° Capitulo. [740] ffor trewly. whan þat' þe hert' of a man is confounded in it' self and trouble and þat' þe saule haþ lost' þe comforte of god þan sekeþ he an ydel solace of worldly þingges

¶ De Auaricia ¶ Paulus ¶ Timothei secundo.

[741] ¶ Auarice aftere þe scripcioñ of seynt' Austyne is a likerousnesse in herte to haue erþely þingges. [742] Som [1] oþer folk' seyn þat' auarice is forto purchace mony erþely þingges and no þinge ȝeue to hem þat' han nede. [743] And vnderstonde þow wel þat' auarice nys not' oonly in land' ne catell but' somtyme in science and in glorie and in euery manere of outrageous þingges is auarice and coueitise [744] And þe difference ytwix Auarice and couetise is þis Coueitise is forto coueite suche þingges as þow hast' not' And auarice is forto wiþholde and kepe suche þingges as þou hast' wiþ-out' riȝtful nede [745] Soþly þis Auarice is a synne þat' is ful dampnable for al holy writte curseþ it and spekeþ aȝeinst' it' ffor it' doþ wronge to Ihesu crist' [746] for it byreueþ hym þe loue þat' men to hym owen and turneþ it' bakward' aȝeinst' all' resoñ [747] and makeþ þat' þe auaricious man haþ more hope in his catel þan in Ihesu crist' And

¶ Augustinus

[. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] [748] þerfore seiþ

¶ Ephesianos 5° capitulo

seyn Paule Ephesios .5°. That' auerous man / haþ more hope in his þraldome of ydolatrie

[749] ¶ What' difference is ytwix an ydolastre and an auarous man but' þat' an ydolastre and an auarous man ne haþ but' a mawmet' or twoo? and þe auaricious man haþ monye ffor certes euery floreyn in his Coffre is his mawmet' [750] And certes þe synne of Maumetrie is þat' god in þe ten / comaundmentes as bereþ witnesse in Exodi capitulo .xx°. [751] Thou / shalt' haue no fals goddes byforn me. Ne þou shalt make to þe no grauen þinge. Thus as is an Auaricious man [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] ¶ And ydolastre [752] þorgh his synne of Auarice and of coueitise commen þise hard lordshippes þorgh which men ben strayned by taliages. custumes and cariages more þan / her duete or reson is ¶ And ellis take þei of her bonde men amercementz which myghten more resonably be cleped extorcions þan amercymentz. [753] Of which amercymentes and raunsonynge of boond men some lordes Stuardes seyn þat' it' is rizhtfull for as moche as a cherle haþ no temporell þinge. þat' it' ne is his lordes as þei sayne. [754] But' certes þise lordshippes doon wronge þat' byreuen her bonde folk' þingges þat' þei neuere ne zaf hem ./ Augustinus de Civitate libro ix°. [755] ¶ Sooþ is þat' þe condicion of þraldome and þe furst' cause of þraldome is for synne. G[e]nesis v^to^.

¶ Exodi xx°: capitulo ./

¶ Augustinus de civitate. libro. ix°

¶ Genesis .5to /

[756] Thus may ze seen þat' þe gilt' descrueth thraldom [1]But' not' nature [757] Wherfor þise lordes ne shuld not' moche glorifie hem in her lordship siþens þat' by natureH condicions þei bene [not] lordes ouer her þralles. but for þat' þraldom come furst' by desert' of synne. [758] And ferþer ouer þer as þe lawe seiþ þat' temporell goodes of bonde folk bene þe goodes of her lordshippes ze þat' is forto vnderstonde þe goodes of þe Emperour to defende hem in her rizt' but' not' to robbe hem ne to reue hem. [759] ¶ And þerfore

¶ Seneca

seiþ Senec'. Thy prudence shuld lyue benignely wiþ þine þraH. [760] Thilk' þat' þou clepest' þine þraH bene goddys puple. ffor humble folk bene cristes frendes þei bene contubernial wiþ þe lord'

[761] ¶ Thenk' eke þat' suche sede as churles ¶ springen: of suche seed springgen lordes. as wel may þe cherle be saued as þe lorde. [762] þe same deþ þat' takeþ þe cherle. þe same deeþ takeþ þe lorde. wherfore I rede do riȝht' so wiþ þi cherle as þou woldest' þi lorde did wiþ þe if þou were in his plite [763] Euery synful man is a cherle to synne ¶ I rede þe Certes þat' þou lorde worche in suche wise þat' þi cherles raþer loue þe than drede þe [764] ¶ I woote wel þer is degree aboue degre as resoñ is and skiH is þat' men / done her devoyre þer as it' is dwe But' certes extorcions and despites of ȝoure vnderlyngges is dampnable.

[765] And forther ouer vnderstonde weH þat' conquerours or tyrauntz maken ful often þralles of hem þat' bene born of as Royal blood as bene þei þat' hem conqueren. [766] This name of thraldome was neuere knowe erst' til þat' Noe seid þat' his sone ¶ De Noe Canaan shuld be þraH to his breþeren for his synne. [767] ¶ What say we þan of hem þat' pillen and done extorcions to holy churche ¶ Certes þe swerd' þat' me ȝeuen furst' to a knyght' whan he is newe dubbed signifieþ þat' he shuld defende holy church and nouȝt' robbe it' and who so dooþ is a traitour' to crist'. [768] as seiþ seynt' Austyne ¶ They bene ¶ Augustinus deuels wolfes þat' stranglen þe shepe of *Ihesu* criste and bene wors þan wolfes. [769] ffor soþly whan þe wolf haþ ful his wombe. He stynteth to strangle shepe. But' soþly þe pylours and distroyours of good of holy church ne doon not' so for þei ne stynte neuere to pillen. [770] Now as I haue seide so siþens so is [1]þat' synne was furst' cause of thraldome Than it' is

þus þat' þilk tyme þat' al þis world was in synne þan was al þis worlde in þraldome and in subiecciõn./ [771] But' certes siþen þe tyme of grace cam god ordeyned þat' some folk shuld be more highe in estate and hie degree. and some folk more lowe and þat' eueryche shulde be serued in his estaat/ and *in* degre. [772] And þerfore in some contrey þer þei bene þralles whan þei / han turned hem to þe feiþ þei maken her þralles free out' of þraldome And þerfor certes þe lorde oweþ to his man þat' þe man oweþ to his lorde [773] ¶ þe pope clepeþ hym self seru*au*nte of Seru*au*ntes of god. But' for as moche as þe state of holy church ne my3t' not' han bee ne þe comon profite ne my3t' han be kept' ne pees and rest' in erþe but' if god had ordeyned þat' som men han hier degre and som*me* men lowere [774] ¶ þerfor was souereynte ordeyned to kepe and mayntene and defende her vnderlyngges or her subiectes in resoñ as ferforþe as it' liþe in her power and not' to distroye hem ne as ferforþ confounde. [775] wherfore I say þat' þilk' lordes þat' bene þilk' wolfes þat' deuouren þe possessions or þe catel of poor folk wrongfully wiþ-out*en* mercy or mesure [776] þer shullen resceyue by þe same mesur*e* þat þei han mesured to poor folk' þe mercy of Ih*es*u crist' but' it' be amended [777] ¶ Now co*mm*eþ despite bytwix Marchaunt' and marchaunt'. And þou shalt' vnderstonde þ*at*' Marchaundise is in mony maners. þat' oon is bodyly & þat' oþer is goostly. þat' oon is leeful and þat' oþer is dishonest and vnlieful [778] ¶ of þilk bodily marchau*n*dyse þat' is leeful and honest' is þis þat' þer as god hath ordeyned þat a regne or a contre is sufficient' him self þan is it' honest' and lieful þat' of þe habundaunce of þis cuntre þat' men helpe anoþer cuntre þat' is more nedye [779] and þerfore þei mote be Marchauntz to bringe from þat' oon cuntre to þat' oþer her march-

au*n*dise../ [780] ¶ That' oþere marchaundise þat' men haunte wiþ fraude trecherye and disceyte wiþ lesyngg*es* and fals oþes is cursed and dampnable. [781] ¶ Espirituel Marchaundise [1]is p*ro*prely Symonye þat' is ententif desire to by þenk' espirituel that' is þing' þat' app*er*teyneþ to þe sentuary of god and to cure of þe soule. [782] This desire if so be þat' a man do hys diligence to p*er*fourme it' al be it' þat' his desire ne take noon effecte ȝit' is it' to hym a dedly synne and if he be ordred he is aregulere [783] ¶ Certes Symony is cleped of Symon magus þat' wolde haue bouȝt' þe temporel CateH./ þe ȝift' þat' god had ȝeuen / by þe holy goost' to seint' Peter and to þe apostels./ [784] And þerfore vnderstondeþ þat' boþ he þat' selleþ and he þat' byeth̄ þingges espirituH bene cleped Symonyals be it' catel be it' procurynge or by flesshly preier of his frendes or of spirituel frendes [785] [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] Soþly if þei prey for hy*m* þat' is not' able ne worþi. it' is Symonye. If he take þe benefice and if he be worþi and able he nys noon. [786] ¶ That' oþer maner is if a man or a wo*m*man preyeþ for folk to au*au*nsen hem / only for wikked flesshly affection þat' þei han vnto þe p*er*sones and þat' is in foule Symonye. [787] But' certes in seruice for which̄ men ȝeuen þingges espirituels vnto her seru*au*ntes It' most' be vnderstonde þ*at*' þe seruise most' be honest' and ellis not'. and eke þat' hit be wiþ out' barganynge and þat' þe p*er*sone be able. [788] ffor as seiþ seint' Damasie ¶ Alle þe synnes of þe world' at' þe regarde of this synne bene as a þinge of nouȝt'. ffor it' is þe grettest' synne þat' may be aftere [2]þe synne of lucifer[2] and of antecrist' [789] for by þis synne god forleseþ þe churche and þe soule þat' he bouȝt wiþ his precious blood by hem þat' ȝeuen chirches to hem þat' bene not digne. [790] ffor þei putten in þeues þat'

¶ Damasius

[2—2 repeated in MS.]

stelen þe soules of Ihesu crist and distroyeþ his patrymoyne [791] by suche vndigne preestes and curates han men þe lasse reuerence of þe sacramentes of holy churche. And suche ȝeuers of churches putten out' þe children of' crist. and putten in þe churche þe deuels owne sone. [792] þei sellen þe soules þe lombes shulden kepen to þe wolf þat' strangleþ hem and þerfore shul þei neuere haue parte of þe pasture of lambes þat is þe blisse of heuene. [793] ¶ Now commeþ hasardy with̄ his a[1]purtynaunces as tables and Rafuls of which̄ commeþ disceite fals oþes chidyngges and alle ravanys blasphemynge and reneiynge of god and hate of his neghbours waast' of good in spendyng' of tyme and somtyme mannys sclaughter [794] Certes hasardours ne may not' be wiþ-out' grete synne þe whiles þei haunte þat' craft [795] Of Auarice commeþ eke lesingges. þeeft' and fals witnesse. and fals oþes and ȝe shal vnderstonde þat' þise bene grete synnes and expresse aȝeinst' þe comaundementz of god as I haue said [796] ¶ ffals witnesse is in worde and eke in dede In worde as forto byreue þine neiȝbours good name by þi fals witnessinge or byreue hym his Catell̄ or his heritage by þi fals witnessinge. whan þou for Ire or for mede or for envie berest' fals witnesse or accusest hym. or excusest hym by þi fals witnesse. or ellis excusest' þine self falsly. [797] ware ȝou questmongers and notaries. Certes for fals witnessyng' was Susanna in grete sorowe & peyn and mony anoþer moo [798] ¶ The synne of þeft is eke expres aȝeinst goddes heest' and þat' in two maners corporell̄ and spirituell̄ [799] [Corporell̄] as for to take þine neighbours catell̄ aȝeinst' his wille. be it' by force or by sleight' by it' by mette or by mesure. [800] By stelynge eke of fals enditementz vpon hym and in borowinge of þine neighbours Catell̄ in entent' neuer to pay. And semplable þingges [801] espirituell̄ þeft' is sacrilege þat' is to seyn hurt-

Of Hasardry

¶ De falso testimonio

¶ De ffurto

ynge of holy þingges or of þingges sacred to crist in two maners by resoñ of þe holy place as churches or chirch̃ hawes. [802] for euery vyleyns synne þat' men doon in suche places may be cleped Sacrilegge or euery violence in þe semblable places./ ¶ Also þei þat' wiþdrawen falsly þe riȝtes þat' longen to holy church̃. [803] And pleynly and generally sacrilege is to ȝeue holy þinge fro holy place. or vnholy þinge out' of holy place. or holy þing' out' of vn-holy place

[*The Remedy against Avarice.*]

[804] ¶ Now shul ȝe vnderstonde þat' þe releuyng of Auarice is misericord̃ and pite largely taken./ ¶ And men myȝten axen why þat' misericorde and pite is releuynge of auarice [805] ¶ Certes þe Auarous [1]man scheweth no pite ne misericord̃ to þe nedeful man ffor he deliteþ hym in þre kepingges of his tresoure and not in þe reskowinge ne releuing' of his euen-cristen and þerfore speke I furst' of misericorde [806] þan is misericorde as seiþ þe philosophre ¶ A vertue by whiche þe corage of a man is stired by þe myssese of hym þat' is myssesed [807] vpon which̃ misericord foloweþ pite in p*er*fourmynge of charitable werkes of misericord̃. [808] And certes þise meuen man to þe misericord̃ of Ih*es*u crist' þat' hym self for our gilt' suffred deeth̃ for misericord̃ and forȝaue vs our origynal synnes [809] and þer-by relesed vs fro þe peyne of helle and amenuseþ þe peynes of purgatorie by penytence. and ȝeueþ grace wel to doo. and at' þe last þe Ioie of heuene [810] The spices of misericorde bene as forto lene. and forto ȝeue / and forto [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] relees. and for to haue pite in hert' and compassioñ of þe meschief of his

¶ Reuel*acio* Auaricie

¶ Philo*sophus*

euencristen. and eke. chastise þer as nede is [811] ¶ Anoþer maner remedy aȝeinst Auarice is resonable largesse. But soþly here byhoueth þe consideracioñ of þe grace of Ihesu crist and of his temporeH goodes and eke of þe goodes perdurables þat crist ȝaue vs. [812] and eke to haue remembrannce of þe deep þat he shal haue he noot not whan. and eke *þat* he shal forgoon aH þat he haþe [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] dispended in good

[813] ¶ But for as moche as some folk bene vnmesurable men ouȝten eschewe fool largesse þat men clepen waast [814] Certes he þat is fool large ne ȝeueth not his cateH. but he leseþ his cateH. Sooþly what þinge þat he ȝueeþ for veyn glorie as to Mynstralles and to folk forto byreuen his renoun in þe world he haþ do / [synne and non] almesse. [815] ce[r]tes he leseþ foule his good þat he ne sekeþ no þinge of his good but synne. [816] he is like to an hors þat sekeþ raþer to drink drovy or troubly watere þan of þe clere welle [817] And for as moche as þei ȝeue þere as þei shuld not ȝeue to hem apperteyneþ þilk malysoñ *þat* criste shal ȝeuen at þe day of dome to hem þat shul be dampned. /

De Gula /

[818]

¶ Gula ./. Aftere Auarice commeþ glotenye whiclh is expresse eke aȝeinst þe comaundement of god ¶ Gloteny is vnmesurable appetit to ete or to drink or ellis to doon ynoghh to þe vnmesurable and discord coueityse to ete and to drynk [819] ¶ This synne corrumpeþ al þis world as is wel shewde in [1]in þe synne of

¶ Paulus Adam and of Eua ¶ Loo eke what seiþ seynt Paule of gloteny [820] ¶ Mony seiþ seint Paule gooñ of whiclh

I haue oft' seide to ȝou. and nowe I seie it' wepynge þat' þei bene Enemyes of þe crois of crist' of which̄ þe ende is deeþ and of which̄ her woombe is her god and her glorye in confusion of hem þat' so saueren erþely þingges [821] he þat' is vsant' to þis synne of glotenye he ne may no synne wiþstonde. he / mote bene in seruage of all vices. for it' is þe deuels hoorde þer [he] hideþ him and resteþ [822] ¶ This synne haþ mony spices ¶ The furst' is dronknes þat' is þe horrible sepulcre of mannys resoñ And þerfore whan þat' a man is dronken. he haþ lost' his resoñ and þis is dedly synne [823] ¶ But' certes whan a man is nat' wonte to straunge drynk and *per*auenture ne knoweþ not' þe strength of þe drynk' or haþ feblenesse in his hede or haþ travailled þorgh̄ which̄ he drinkeþ þe moore al be he sodeynly cauȝte wiþ drink' it' is no dedly synne. but' venial [824] ¶ The secounde spice of Gloteny is þat' þe spirit' of a man wexeþ al trouble. for dronknesse byreueþ hym þe discrecioñ of his witte [825] ¶ The þred spice of gloteny is whan a man deuoureþ his mete and haþ no riȝt-ful maner' of etynge [826] ¶ The fourte is whan þorgh̄ þe grete habundaunce of his mete þe humo*urs* of his body bene distempred [827] ¶ The v. is forȝetelnesse by to mochel drynkynge. ffor which̄ somtyme a man forȝeteþ by þe morowe what' he did at' Eue or on þe nyȝt' byfor

[828] ¶ In oþer manere bene distincte of vices & spices of glotenye aftere seint' Gregorie ¶ The furst' is forto ete by- ¶ Gregorius ./
fore tyme. The secounde whan a man geteþ hym to delicate mete [829] ¶ The iij. is whan men taken to moche ouere mesure ¶ The 4 is curiosite wiþ grete entent' to maken and apparailen his mete ¶ The .v. is forto eten to gredely [830] Thise bene the .v. fyngers of þe / deuel*es* honde. by which̄ he draweþ folk' to synne

[*The Remedy against Gluttony.*]

Remedium./ [831] ¶ Aȝeinst' glotenye is the remedy abstinence of his body as seiþ Galien. but' þat' hold' I not' meritorie if he do it' only for þe helþ of his body ¶ Seynt' Augustinus. austyne wil þat' abstinence be doon for vertue & wiþ pacience [832] ¶ Abstinence he seiþ is litel worþ. but' if a / man haue good wille þerto / and but' if it be enforced by pacience and by charite and þat' men doon it' for goddys / sake and in hope to haue þe blisse of heuene

[833] ¶ The felowes of abstynence. bene attemperaunce þat' haldeþ þe mene in alle [1]þingges ¶ Eke shame þat' escheweþ alH dishoneste. Suffisaunce þat' sekeþ no riche metes ne drinkes ne dooþ noo force of noon / outrageous apparaillynge of mete [834] Mesure also þat' restreyneþ by resoñ þe delaue appetite of etynge. Sobrenesse also þat' restreyneþ þe outrage of drynk. [835] Sparyng' also þat' restreyneþ þe delicate eese to sitte longe atte mete and softly // wherfore some folk' stonden of her owne wille and to eten at' þe lasse leisere

¶ De luxuria Sequitur./

[836]

Luxuria Aftere Gloteny commeþ lecherye. ffor þise two synnes ben so nygH Cosyns þat' often tyme þei wil not' departe./ [837] God woote þis synne is ful displesaunt' þing' to god. ffor he / seiþ hym self. do no lecherye. And þerfore he putteþ grete peynes aȝeinst' þis synne. As in þe olde lawe. [838] ¶ If woman þral were taken in þis synne. she shuld be beten wiþ staues to þe dethe And if she were a gentile woman she shulde be sclayn witH stones And if she were a bishoppes douȝter' she shuld be brent' by goddis comanndement' [839] ¶ fferþermore by þe synne of lecherye god drayn't' al þe world' at' þe

diluve. And after þat' he brent' .v. Citees wiþ liȝt' and sonke hem into helle

[840] ¶ Nowe lat' vs speke þan of þilk' stynkinge synne of lechery. þat' men clepen aduoutrie of wedded folk þat' is to say if þat' oon of hem be wedded or ellis booþ [841] ¶ Seint' Iohn seiþ þat' þe aduoutrers schullen be in helle in a stynk' brennyng' of fuyre and of bremstoon. In fuyre for lechery. In bremstone for þe stynke of her ordure [842] ¶ Certes þe brekinge of þis sacrament' is an horrible þinge. it' was made of god hym self in Paradise and confermed by Ihesu crist' as wittnesseþ seint' Mathewe in þe gospell ¶ A man shal lete fadere and modere and take hym to his wiff and þei shul be twoo in oo flessh [843] ¶ This sacrament' bytokeneþ þe knyttyng' to-gidere of crist' and of holy churche. [844] and nat' oonly þat' god forbad aduoutrie in bedde. but' eke he comaunded þat' þou shuldest' not' coveyte þine neighbours wiff [845] ¶ In þis heest' seiþ seint' Austyne is for-boden al manere coueitise to doon lecherie ¶ Loo what' seiþ seint' Mathewe þe .v. chapitle / in þe gospell. þat' who so seeþ a womman to coueitise of his lust. he haþ doon lecchery wiþ her in his hert [846] ¶ Here may ȝe see þat' not' oonly þe dede of this synne is forbode: but' eke þe desire to doon þat' synne [847] ¶ This cursed [1]synne annoyeþ greuously hem þat' it' haunten and first' to her saule for he obligeþ it' to synne and to peyne of þe deeþ / þat' is perdurable. [848] vnto þe body annoyeþ it' greuously also for it' drieþ hym and waasteþ hym / and [. . *no gap in MS.*] of his blood he makeþ sacrifice to þe feende of helle. hit' waasteþ eke his catell and his substannce. [849] & certes if it' be a foule þing' a man to waast' his catell on wommen. ȝit' is it' a foulere þinge whan þat' for such ordure wommen dispenden vpon men her catell and her substannce [850] ¶ This synne as seiþ the prophete byreueþ man and womman her good fame and al her honure and it' is ful plesaunt to þe deuel. for þerby

¶ Sanctus Iohannes

¶ Augusti

¶ Matheus

¶ Prophet

wynneth he þe most' partie of þis world' [851] And riȝt' as a marchannte deliteþ hym most' in chaffare þat' he haþ most' au*au*ntage of Riȝt'. so deliteþ þe feende in þis ordure

[852] this is þat' oþer hand of þe deuel wiþ .v. fyngres to cacche þe puple to his vilanye [853] ¶ The first' fynger is þe foolissh̄ lokinge of the foolyssh̄ man or the folissh̄ wo*m*man þat' scleeþ riȝt' as þe basilicok scleeþ folk' by þe venyme of his / sight'. ffor þe Coueityse of þe eyen foloweþ þe couetise of þe herte [854] ¶ That' oþer fynger is þe vileyns touchynge · in wicked maner' And þerfore seiþ Salomon̄. þat' who so toucheþ and handleþ a wo*m*man. he fareþ like hy*m* þat' handleþ þe scorpion̄ þat' stynge þ and sodeynly scleeþ þourgh̄ his enuenemynge. As who so toucheþ warme picch̄. he shent' his fyngres [855] ¶ The iij is foolissh̄ wordes þat' fareþ lich̄ fire þat' brenneþ. þat' riȝt' anoon brenneþ þe h*er*te. [856] ¶ The iiij. is þe kissynge. And soþly he were a grete fool þat' wolde kysse þe mouþ of a brennyng' ouen or of a forneys. [857] And / more fooles bene þei þat' kissen in vileynye for þat' mouþ is þe mouþe of helle. And namely þise olde dotardes holours ȝit' wil þei kisse þouȝe þei may not' do. and smatere hem [858] ¶ Certes þei bene like to houndes. ffor an hounde whan he co*m*meþ by þe Rosere or by oþ*er* bewtees þouȝe he may not' pisse. ȝit wil he heuene vp his legge and make co*u*ntena*u*nce to pisse. [859] And for þat' mony man wenethh̄ þat' he may noȝt' synne for no likerousnesse þat' he doþ withh̄ his wiff Certes þat' opynyon̄ is fals ¶ God woote a man / may scle hym self wiþ his owne knyff. And maken hy*m* dru*n*ke wiþ his owne tunge [860] Certes be it' wif or childe or eny worldly þing' þat' he loueth to-fore god it' is his mameut' and he is his ydolastre [861] ¶ A man shuld loue his wiff by discrecion̄ paciently and temp*er*ally And þan is she as it'

were his suster' [862] ¶ The .v. [1]fynger' of þe deuels honde is þe stynkynge dede of lecherie [863] Cert*es* þe .v. fyngers of glotenye þe fende putte in þe wombe of a man. and wiþ þise .v. fyngers of lecherie he gripeþ hy*m* by þe Raynes forto þrowe hym into þe fornais of helle. [864] þer as þei / shul han þe fuyr' and þe wormes þat' euere shul lasten. and wepyng' and waillyng'. sharp hunger' and þrest'. Grislynesse of deuels þat' shullen alto treden hem wiþ-outen respite and w*ith*-outen eende [865] ¶ Of lecchery as I seide sourden dyuers spices As fornicacion þat' is bytwix man and wo*m*man þat' bene not' maried. and þis is dedly synne and aȝeinst' nature. [866] for al þat' is enemye and destructioñ to nature is aȝeinst' nature. [867] P*ar*fay þe reson of a man telleth hy*m* eke wel þat' it' is dedly synne for as mocħ as god forbode lechery. And seint' Paule ȝeueþ hym þe regne þat' is due to no wiȝt ¶ But' to hem þat' doon dedly synne [868] ¶ A noþer synne of lechery is forto byreuen a maide of her maidenhode. ffor certes he þat' so dooþ he caccheth a mayde out' of þe hiest' degree þat' is in þis present' liff [869] and byreueþ hure þilk' pr[e]cious fruyte þat' þe boke clepeþ þe hundred fruyte I ne can not' say it' in noon oþer way in englissħ. but' in latyne it' hight' Centesim*us* fructus [870] Certes he þat so doþ is cause of mony damages and vilenyes moo þan eny man can rekne Riȝt' as he somtyme is cause of aħ Damages þat' beest*es* doon in þe feelde þat' brekeþ þe hegge or þe closure þorowe whicħ he distroieþ þat' may not' be restored. [871] ffor certes no more may maidenhede be restored. þan an harme smyte fro þe body may retourne aȝein to wexe. [872] She may haue mercy þis wote I weħ if she doo penitence. but' neuer shal it' be þat' she nas corrupte. [873] And al be it' so þat' I haue spoken somwhat' of aduoutrie. it' is good to shewen moo p*er*iles þat' longen to aduoutrie forto eschewe þe foule

synne of [874] aduoutrie ¶ Auoutry in latyne is forto seyne approchinge of an oþer mannys bed. þoorgh which þoo þat' whilom were oo flesshh. abounden her body to oþer persones [875] ¶ Of þis synne as seiþ þe wise man commeþ mony harmes ¶ ffirst brekinge of þei feiþ. And certes feiþ is keye of cristendome [876] And whan þat' feiþ is broke and lorne. soþly cristendome stant'. [veyne] And wiþ-out' fruyte [877] þis synne is eke a þeef./ ¶ ffor þeeft' generalli to speke is forto Reue a wiȝt' his þing' aȝeinst' his wille. [878] Certes þis is þe foulest' þeft' that may be. wha*n* [1]a wo*m*man steleþ her body from her husbond and ȝeueþ it' to her holour to defoule her' and steleþ her soule from crist' & ȝeueþ it' to þe deuel. [879] This is a foule[r] þeft' þan forto stele or breke þe chalice from þe autere. ffor þise aduoutrers breken þe temple of god spirituelly and stelen þe vesselh of grace þat' is þe body and þe saule. ffor which crist' shal destroien hem as seiþ seynt' Paule. [880] ¶ Soþly of þis þeft' douted gretly Ioseph whan þat' his lordys wif preide hym of vilanye whan he saide ¶ lo my lorde howe my lady haþ take to me vnder my ward al þat' he haþ in þis world. ne no þing' of his ouȝt' of my pouer' but' oonly ȝe þat' bene his wiff [881] and howe shuld I þan doon þis wikkednesse & synne so horribli aȝeinst god. god it' forbede. Allas al to litel is suche trouþe now yfounde [882] ¶ The iij. harme is the filþe þorowe þe which þei breken þe comaundemen of god and defoulen þe autere of her mat*r*imoyne þat' is crist' [883] ffor certes in so moche as þe sacrament' of mariage is so noble and so digne. So moche it' is þe gretter synne forto breke it'. ffor god made mariage in p*ar*adys in þe estate of Innocence to multiplie mankynde to þe seruice of god. [884] and þerfore is þe brekinge þerof greuous. Of which breking' co*m*men fals heires often tyme þat' wrongfulli occupien folkes heritage and þerfore wil c*r*ist' putte

¶ Paulus.

hem out' of þe regne of heuene þat' is heritage to good folk [885] ¶ Of þis breking' commeþ eke oft' tymes þat' folk vnware wedden or synnen with her owne kynredo. and namely þilk' harlottes þat' haunten bordels ¶ Of thise fool wommen þat' mowen be likned to a comune gonge wher as men purge her ordure [886] ¶ What' say we eke of putours þat' lyuen by þe horrible synne of Putrie and constreynen wommen ȝe somtyme his owne wiff or his childe as doon þise bawdes to ȝeelden hem a certeyn rent' of her bodily putrie Certes þise bene cursed synnes [887] ¶ Vnderstondeþ eke þat' aduoutrie is sette gladly in the x. comaundementz bytwix þeft' and mannys sclaughter. for it' is þe grettest' þeft' þat' may be. ffor it' is þeeft' of body and soule [888] and it' is like homycide ffor it' kerueþ a twoo and brekeþ a twoo hem þat' furst' were ymaked oo flessh. and þerfor by þe olde lawe þei [1]shuld be sclayn [889] But' naþelees by þe lawe of Ihesu crist' þat' is þe lawe of pite whan he saide to þe womman þat' was / founde in aduoutrie and shuld haue bene sclayn wiþ stones aftere þe wille of þe Iwes as was her lawe ¶ Go quod ihesu crist and haue no more wille to do synne or wil no more to do synne [890] Soþly vengeaunce of aduoutrie is a-warded to þe peyne of helle but' it' be destroubled by penaunce [891] ¶ ȝit' bene þere moo spices of þis cursed synne. as whan þat' oon of hem is religious or ellis booþ. or of folk þat' bene entred into ordere as subdeken or deken or preest' or hospitalers. and euer þe hier þat' he is in ordere þe gretter is þe synne [892] The þingges þat' gretly aggreggen. his synne is þe breking' of his avowe of chaastite whan he receyueþ order'. [893] And ferþer ouer. sooþ is þat' holy order' is cheef of alle þe tresour of god. And his especial syngne and marke of' chaastite to shewe þat' þei bene Ioyned to chastite which þat' is þe moost' precious lif þat' is. [894] And eke þise ordred folk' bene specially tytled to god. and of þe

special mayne of god. ffor whicħ whan þei doon dedly synne þei bene þe special traitours of god and of his puple. ffor þei lyuen of þe puple to prey for þe puple. And while þer bene suchħ traitours her preiers availlen not' to þe puple./ [895] ¶ Preestes bene as aungels as by
¶ Paulus. þe dignite of hir mysterye ¶ But' forsoþ seynt' poule seiþ. þat sathanas transformeþ hym into an aungeħ of liȝt'. [896] Soþly þe preest' þat' hauntеþ synne he may be likned vnto þe aungel of derknesse. transformed in þe aungel of liȝt' ¶ He semeþ aungel of liȝt'. but' forsoþ he is aungel of derknesse [897] ¶ Suche preestes bene þe sones of Belye. as scheweþ in þe boke of kyngges þat' þei weren þe sones of Belial þat' is þe deueħ [898] Belial is to say wiþ-out' Iuge. and so faren þei. hem þenke þei bene free and han no Iuge no more þan haþ a free boole þat' takeþ whicħ kowe þat' him litek in þe toune. [899] So faren þei by we*mm*en. ffor riȝt' [as] a fre bulle is ynouȝe for al a toune Riȝt' so is a / wikked preest' corrupte ynough for al a parissħ or aħ a cuntree [900] Thise preestes as seiþ þe boke ne kon nott þe mysterye of preesthode to þe puple. ne god ne knoweþ [1]hem nouȝt' They ne holden hem nouȝt' a-paide as seiþ þe boke of soden flessħ þat' was to hem offred but' þei toke by force þe flesshe þat' is rawe [901] Certes riȝt' so þise schrewes ne holdene hem not' a-paide of rosted flessħ and soden flessħ wiþ þe whicħ þe pupeħ fedden hem in grete reuerence. But' þei wil haue rawe flessħ as folkes wyues and her doughtren [902] ¶ And certes wo*mm*en þat' consenten to her harlotrie done grete wronge to c*rist*' and to holy churche and to alhalowes and to aħ saules ffor þei byreuen al þese hy*m* þat' shulde worshipen crist' and holy churcħ and prey for cristen saules [903] And þerfore han suche preestes and her lemmans eke þat' consenten to her leccherie þe malisoñ of þe/ courte cristen to þei come to amendement'

[904] ¶ The iij spice of aduoutrie is somtyme by-twene a man and his wiff. & þat' is whan þei taken no reward in her assemblynge but' only to hèr flesshly delite as seiþ seint' Ierom. [905] and ne rekken of noþinge but' þat' þei bene assembled by cause þat' þei bene ymaried. al is good ynouȝe as þenkeþ to hem [906] But' in suche folk haþ þe deuel pouer as seide þe aungel Raphael to/ Thobie. ffor in her assemblynge þei putten Ihesu crist' out' of her hertes and ȝeue hem self to alł ordure [907] ¶ þe iiij spice is þe assemblynge of hem þat' bene of her kynrede. or of hem þat' bene of oon affinite or ellis wiþ hem wiþ þe which her faders or her kynrede han deled wiþ in þe synne of lecherie This synne makeþ hem liche houndes þat' taken no kepe of kynrede [908] and certes Parentela is in two maners oiþer / goostly or flesshly. Goostely as forto delen wiþ her gossipes [909] ffor riȝt' so as [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] is his godfader his fadere espirituel ffor which a womman may in no lasse synne assemble wiþ her Gossipe þan wiþ her owne flesshly broþere [910] ¶ The v. spice is þilk' abhominable synne of which þat' no man vnneþes ouȝt' to/ speke ne write // Naþelees it' is openly rehersed in holy writt' [911] [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] speke of horrible synne Certes holy writt may not' be defouled no more þan þe sonne þat shyneþ on a myxen./ [912] ¶ Anoþer synne apperteneþ to lecherie þat' commeþ in sclepinge and þis synne commeþ oft' to hem þat' bene maydens and eke to hem þat' bene corrupte And þis synne men clepen pollucioñ þat' commeþ in iiij. maners [913] Somtyme of a langwisshing' [1]of body for þe humours bene to rank' and habundañt' in þe body of man. somtyme for þe infirmite for þe feblesse of þe vertue retentif' as phisik makeþ menciōn. somtyme for sorfete of mete and drinke [914] and somtyme for

¶ Ieronomus

¶ Angelus Raphael

vileyns þou3tes þat' bene enclosed in mannes mynde whan he gooþ to sclepe whicħ may not' bene wiþ-outen synne fro whiche þei may not' kepe hem wisely or ellis may men synne ful greuously

¶ Reme*dium* *contra* lux*uriam*

[915] ¶ Now co*m*meþ þe remedy a3einst' leccherie and þat' is generalli chaastite and contynence at' refreyneþ al þe disordeyne meuyngges þat' co*m*men of flesshly talentes [916] And euere þe gretter merite shal he haue þat' most' restreyneþ þe wikked enchawfinge of ordure of þis synne and this is in two maners / þat' is to sayn. chaastite of mariage and chastite of widowhede [917] ¶ Now shalt' þ*o*u here þat' mat*r*imoyne is leeful assemblyng' of man and woman þat' resceyuen by þe vertue of þe sacrement' þe boond' þorgħ whicħ þei may not bene departed in aħ hir liff' þat' is to say. þe whiles þei lyuen boþ. [918] this is as / seiþ þe book' a ful grete sacrament'. god made it' as I haue saide in p*ar*adis and wold' hy*m*-self be born in maryage. [919] and for [to] halowe mariage he was at' a weddinge. Where as he turned water into wyne whicħ was þe furst' myracle þat' he wrou3t' in erþe byforn his disciples. [920] Trewe effecte of mariage clenseþ fornicacioñ & replenysseþ holy churcħ in good lynage. ffor as þe ende of mariage as it' chaungeþ dedly synne into venial ytwix hem þat' bene wedded / and makeþ þe hertys allon of hem þat' bene ywedded as wel as the bodies [921] þis is verrey mariage þat' is establisshed by god er þat' synne bygan. whan naturel lawe was in his ri3t' poynt' in paradys. And it' was ordeyned þat' oo man shuld' haue but' oo wo*m*man and oo wo*m*man but' oo man as seiþe seynt' Austyne by mony resons

¶ Aug*ustinus*

[922] ffurst' for þat' mariage is figured bitwix man. and

holy churche. And anoþ*er* is. for þe man is hede of þe womman. Algate by ordynaunce it shulde be doo soo. [923] ffor if a wo*m*man haue moo men þan oon. þan shuld she haue moo hedes þa*n* oon. and þat were and horrible þinge byfore god./ [1]And eke oon wo*m*man ne myȝt not plese to mony men at ones And also þer ne shuld be neuer pees no rest amonges hem for euereche wold aske his owne þinge [924] And ferþermore no man shulde knowe his owne engendrure ne who shuld haue his heritage and þe woman shuld þe lasse be byloued fro þe tyme þat she were commytte to mony men

[925] ¶ Nowe co*m*meth how þat a man shuld bere hy*m* wiþ hys wiff. and/ namely in two þingges þat is to say in suffrannce and in reuerence and þat shewed first c*r*ist whan he made furst womman [926] ffor he ne made her nouȝt of þe hede of Adam. for / she shulde not haue to grete lordship. [927] ffor þer as þe wo*m*man haþ þe maistrie she makeþ to mochel disaraye þer neden noon ensamples of þis. The exp*e*rience of þis auȝt suffise [928] ¶ Also certes god ne made not wo*m*man of þe foote of Adam for she shuld not be holden to lowe for she can not pacyently suffre But god made wo*m*man of the ribbe of Adam for womman shulde be felawe vnto man [929] ¶ Man shulde bere hym to his wiff in feiþ. in trouþe an in loue. as seiþ seint paule that a man shal loue his wiff as crist loued ¶ Paulus./ holy chirch̃ þat loued it so wel þat he dyed for it. So shal a man for his wiff if it were nede

[930] ¶ Now how þat a wo*m*man shuld be subiecte to her husbond þat telleþ seint Peter / [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] [931] and eke as seiþe þe decree. A wo*m*man as longe as she is a wiff she ne haþ noon auctorite to swere ne bere witnesse wiþ-out leue of her husbonde þat is her lord it shuld be so by resoñ. [932] she shulde eke serue hym in all ¶ Petrus

honeste and bene attempre. of her aray I wootꝰ wel
þatꝰ þei shulden setten her entent to plese her hus-
bondes butꝰ notꝰ by her queyntise of aray./ [933] Seyntꝰ
¶ Ieronimus Ierom seiþ. þatꝰ wyves þatꝰ bene apparailedꝰ in silkꝰ and
in purpure ne mowe notꝰ cloþen hem in Ihesu
cristꝰ [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
¶ gregorius./ [934] ¶ Seyntꝰ Gregor seiþ eke þatꝰ no wiȝtꝰ sekeþ
precious aray butꝰ oonly for veynglorie to bene
honoured þe more toforn þe puple [935] ¶ Itꝰ is a
foly a womman to haue a grete aray outwardꝰ and
her self be foule inwardꝰ [936] ¶ A wiff shuld eke be
mesurable in lokynge and in berynge and / in laughinge
and discrete in alꝰ her wordes and dedys [937] and /
abouen alle worldly þingges. She shulde loue her husbonde
wiþ al her herte and to hym by trewe of her body
[938] [1]So shuldꝰ an husbonde eke by trewe to his wif.
ffor siþens þatꝰ al þe body is þe husbondes. soo shuldꝰ
her hertes bene oon Or ellis þer is bytwix hem twoo as in
þatꝰ no parfite mariage [939] ¶ Than shal a man vnder-
stondꝰ þatꝰ for iij. þingges a man and his wiff
mowen assemblen ¶ The furstꝰ is for engen-
drure of children to serue god. ffor certes þatꝰ is
þe cause fynalꝰ of matrimoynye [940] ¶ Anoþer is to
ȝeelde eueriche of hem to oþer þe dette of her body.
ffor neiþer of hem haþ power of her owne bodye
¶ The iij. is forto eschewe leccherye and vilenye
¶ The iiij. forsoþ is dedly synne./ [941] As to þe
furstꝰ itꝰ is meritorie þe seconnde also for as saiþe þe
decree. þatꝰ chaseþ merite of chaastite þatꝰ ȝeldeþ to
her husbonde þe dette of her body. ȝe þouȝe it be
aȝeinstꝰ her lykinge and þe lustꝰ of her herte [942] ¶ The
iij. manere of venial synne. And trewly scarcely may
eny of þise be wiþ-outen venyal synne for þe
corrupcioñ and for þe delite [943] ¶ The iiij.
manere is forto vnderstonde if þei assemble oonly for
amerous loue. and for noon of þe forsaide causes butꝰ

forto accomplise þilk brennyng' delite þei rech̃ neuere hou often · soþly it' is a dedly synne. And ȝit' wiþ sorowe some folk wil peynen hem more to doo þan her appetit' suffiseþ

[944] ¶ The secounde maner of chastite is to be a clene wydowe and to eschewe þe enbrasing' of man and to desire þe enbrasing' of Ih*es*u crist'. [945] Thise bene þoo þat' han beñ wyues and han forgoon her husbondes And eke wo*m*men þat' han / doon lecherye and bene releued by pen*au*nce [946] And certes if þat' a wiff couþe kepe her al chaast' by licence of her husbonde so þat' she ner noon occasioñ þat' he a-gilt' it' were to hir' a grete merite [947] Thise maner of wo*m*men þat' obseruen chaastitee most' be clene in herte as wel as in body and in þouȝt' and mesurable in cloþinge and in contyn*au*nce ¶ Abstynent' in etynge and drynkynge in spekinge and in dede and þan is she þe vesseH of þe boyst' of þe blessed Mawdeleyne þat' fulfilleþ holy church̃ ful of good odure [948] ¶ The iij. maner of chaastite is virgynyte. And it byhoueþ þat' she be holy in hert' and clene of body þan is she spouse to Ih*es*u crist' and she is þe lif of aungels. [949] She is þe preysyng' of þis world And she is as þise marters in regalite [1] she haþ in hur*e* þat' tunge may not' telle [950] Virgynite bare our lorde Ih*es*u crist' and virgyne was hy*m*self

[951] ¶ Another remedy aȝeinst' lecherye is specialy to wiþdrawe such þingg*es* as ȝeuen occasioñ to þilk vilanye as ease and etynge *and* drinkinge. ffor certes whan þe potte boyleþ strongly þe best' remedy is to wiþdrawe þe fuyre [952] ¶ Sleping' longe in grete quiete is eke a grete norice to leccherie

[953] ¶ Another remedye aȝeinst' lecherie is þ*at*' a wo*m*man or a man eschewe companye of hem by which̃ he douteþ to be tempted. for al be it' soo þat' þe dede be wiþ-stonde ȝit' is þere grete temptacioñ

[954] ¶ Soþly a white waH al-þouȝe it ne brenne not fully by stikkynge of a CandeH ȝit is þe walle blak of þe leyte [955] ful oft tyme I rede · þat no man trest in his owne p*er*feccioñ But he be strenger þan Sampsoñ. Holyer þan d*avi*d. wiser þa*n* ¶ Salomon

[956] ¶ Now after þat I haue declared ȝou as I can of þe vij. dedly synnes and some of her br*a*unches and her remedies. soþly if I couþe I wold telle ȝowe þe ten Comaundementz. [957] but so hiȝe a doct*r*ine I lete to devynes. Naþelees I hope to god þei bene touched in þis tretys euerecħ of hem alle

¶ De confessione

¶ Confessio*un*

¶ Aug*ustinus*

[958] NOW for as moche as þe secounde part of penitence stant in confession of mouþ as I byganne in þe [first] chapitere I seye Seint Austyn seiþ. [959] Synne is euery word and euery dede and al þat men coueiten aȝeinst þe lawe of Ih*e*su crist. And þis is forto synne: in herte in mouþ and i*n* dede be þi .v. wittes þat bene siȝt hering smellynge taasting or sauouringe and felynge [960] ¶ Now is it good to vnderstond*e* þe circumstances þat aggreggen mochel euery synne./ [961] ¶ Thow shalt considere what þou art þat dost þe synne. whedere þou be male or female. ȝong or olde. gentile or þraH ffre or seru*au*nte. hool or seke. wedded or syngeH. Ordred or vnordred. wise or fool. clerk or Seculere. [962] If she be of þi kynrede bodily or goostly or noon. If eny of þi kynrede haue synned wiþ hure or noon. and mony moo/ þingges

[963] ¶ That other circumstaunce is this. Whedere it be doon in fornicacioñ or noon. or in aduoutrie. or in incest. or noon maiden / or noon in maner of homicede or noon horrible grete synne or smale. and how longe þ*o*u [1]hast contynued in synne [964] ¶ The iij. circu*m*staunce is þe place where þou hast doon synne whedere in oþer

mennys house or in þine owne. in feeld or in church. or in chirch hawe In church dedicate or noon [965] For if þe church were halowed and man or wo*m*man spillen her kynde in wiþ þat place by-twene way of synne or by wikked temptacioñ þe church were enterdited til it were reconsiled by þe bisshope [966] and þe preest shuld be enterdited þat did such a vilany þe teerme of al his liff. he shuld no more synge masse. and if he did he shuld do dedly synne at euery tyme þat he songe masse [967] ¶ The 4. circumstannce is by which mediatours as by massagers or for enticement or for consentement to bere company wiþ felawship for mony a wrecch forto bere companye willen goo to þe deuel of helle. [968] ffor þei þat eggen or consenten to þe synne bene partniers of þe synne and of þe dampnacioñ of þe synnere

[969] ¶ The .v. is of how mony tymes þat he haþ synned and / it be in his mynde. and howe oft þat he haþ falle. [970] ffor he þat oft falleþ in synne he despiseþ þe mercy of god *and* encreseþ his synne and is vnkynde to god and he wexeþ þe more feble to wiþstonde synne. and synneþ þe more liȝtlier [971] and þe latter ariseþ. and is þe more eschewe for to schryuen hy*m* and namely to hy*m* þat haþ bene his confessoure. [972] ffor which þat folk whan þei falle aȝein in her old folies. ouȝt þei forleten her confessours al vtterly or ellis þei departen her shrift in dyuers place But soþly such departed shrift deserueþ no mercy of god of his synnes. [973] ¶ The sext circumstannce is þis why þat a man synneþ as by whiche temptacioñ And if hy*m* self procure þilk temptacioñ or by excityng of oþer folk. or if þou synne with a wo*m*man by force or by hure owne assent [974] /Or if þe wo*m*man Maugre her hede haþ bene enforsed or noon. þis shal she telle for coueityse or for pouert. And if it were her procurynge or noon and such manere

harnays. [975] ¶ The .7. circu*m*staun*c*e is in what manere he haþ doon his synne. or noon or / how þat he haþ suffred. howe folk han done to her. [976] Of þe same shal men telle pleynly aH circumstannces and whedere he haþ synned wiþ comune bordeH wo*m*men or noon [977] [1]or do his synne in holy tymes or non. In fastyng tymes or non. or be longe from his shrift. or after his latter schrift [978] haþ p*er*auenture broken his penaunce enioyned. by whos helpe and whoos counsaile by sorcery or craft aH þise þingges mosten be tolde. [979] After þat þei bene grete or smale engreggen þe conscience of man ¶ And eke þe preest *þat* is þi Iuge may þe better be auysed of his Iuggement in ȝeuyng of þi penau*n*ce and þat is after þi cont*r*icioñ. [980] ffor vnderstondeþ wel þat aftere tyme þat a man hath̄ defouled his bapteme by synne if he wil come to sauacioñ. ther nys noon oþer way but by penitence and schrift and by satisfaccioñ / [981] and namely by þe two if þer be a confessour to which̄ he may schryve hym. And þe iij. if he haue lif to p*er*fourme it

[982] Than shal man loke and considere if he wil make a trewe and a profitable confessioñ. Ther most be 4. condiciōns [983] ¶ ffirst it most be in sorowful bitternes of herte as seide þe kyng Ezechieh to god ¶ I wil remembre aH þe ȝeeres of my liff in bitternesse of myn herte [984] ¶ This condycioñ of bitternesse haþ .v. signes. The furst is þat confession most be shamefast not forto keueren ne to hiden his synne but for he haþ agilt his god and defoiled/ his soule

¶ Au*gustinus* [985] And here of seiþ seynt Austyne ¶ The h*er*te travailleþ for shame of his synne. And for he hath̄ grete shamfastnesse he is digne to haue grete mercie [986] which̄ was þe confession of þe publycane þat wold not heue vp his yen to heuene for he had offended god in heuene. ffor which̄ shamefastnesse he

¶ Idem./ had anoon þe mercy of god [987] ¶ And therfore seiþ

seint' Austyne. þat' such̃ shamefast' folk bene next' forȝeuenes and remissiõ [988] ¶ That' oþer signe is humylite of confessiõn / of which̃ seiþ seint' Petre ¶ Vmbleþ ȝou vnder þe myȝt' of god þe hand of god is myȝty in confessioñ for þer-by god forȝeueþ þe synnes. ffor he allon haþ þe power / [989] and þis hu*m*ilite shal be in hert' and in sygne outward ¶ ffor riȝt' as he haþ hu*m*ilite to god in his herte Riȝt' so shulde he hu*m*ble his body outward to þe preest' þat' sitte in goddes place [990] for which̃ in no manere siþes þat' crist' is souereyne and / [1] þe preest' mene and mediatour' by twix crist' and þe synner'. and þe synner is þe last' by way of resoñ [991] þan shuld not' þe synner sitte as high̃ as his confessoure but' knele toforn hym or at' his fete but' if malady distroubed it'. ffor he shal not' take kepe who sitte þer but' in whos place þat' he sitteþ. [992] A man þat' haþ trespased to a lorde and co*m*meþ for to aske mercy and maken his accorde and sette hy*m* downe a-noon by þe lorde men wolden holde hy*m* outrageous and not worþi so sone forto haue remissioñ ne mercy. [993] ¶ The iij. signe is þat' þi shrift' shul be ful of teeres if man may wepe or if man may not' wepe wiþ his bodely eyen./ lat' hy*m* wepe in his herte. [994] ffor suche was þe confessioñ of seynt' petre ffor aftere þat' he had forsake Ih*e*su crist' he went' out' and wepte ful bitterly [995] ¶ The iiij. signe is þat' he ne lette not' for his / shame to shewen his confessioñ. [996] Such̃ was þe confessioñ of þe maudeleyn þat' sche ne spared for no shame of hem þ*at*' weren at' þe ffeest' forto go to our lorde Ih*e*su crist' and byknowe to hym her synne [997] ¶ The .v. signe is þat' a man & a wo*m*man be obeysaunte to receyue þe penaunce þat' is hym enioyned. ffor certes Ih*e*su crist' for þe giltes of oon man was obedient' to his deþe

¶ Petrus

[998] ¶ The secounde condicioñ of verrey confessioñ is þat' it' be hastely doñ. ffor certes if a man had a dedly wounde euer þe lenger þat' he tarieþ to warisshe

¶ 2ª condic

him self þe more wold it corrupte and hast hym to his deþe and eke þe wounde wold be þe wors forto hele [999] ¶ And riȝt so fareþ synne þat longe tyme is in a man vnschewed [1000] ¶ Certes a man ouȝt hastely to shewe his synne. for mony causes as for drede of deþe þat co*m*meþ often sodeynly and is in no certeyn what tyme it shal be ne in what place. And eke þe strecchyng of oo synne draweþ in anoþer [1001] ¶ And eke þe lenger þat he tarieth: þe ferþer is he from crist. And if he abide vnto his last day scarcely may he shryve hym or amende hym of his synnes ne repenten hym for þe greuous maladye of his deth̃. [1002] & for as moch̃e as he haþ not in his lif herkened Ih*es*u Crist whan he haþ spoken vnto hy*m*. he shal crien to our lord Ih*es*u crist at his last day. and scarcely wil he harken hy*m* [1003] ¶ Vnder-stonde þat þis condicioñ moste haue four þingges [1] thi schrift most be purueide byforn and avised for wikked hast dooþ no profite and þat a man konne shryue hym of his synnes be it of pride eiþer of Envie and so forþ wiþ þe spices and circumstaunces / [1004] and þat he haue comprehended / in his mynde þe nombre and þe gretnesse of his synnes and/ how longe þat he haþ layne in synne [1005] and eke þat he be contrite of his synnes and in stedfast p*ur*poos by þe [grace of god] neuere eft to falle aȝein in synne and eke þat he drede and countrewaite hym self þat he flee þe occasions of synne to whic̃h he is enclyned [1006] ¶ Also þat þow shalt schryve þe of alle þi synnes to oo man and nouȝt p*ar*ceH mele to oon man and p*ar*sel mele to a noþer man þat is to vnderstonde in entent to p*ar*ten þi confessioñ as for shame or for drede. ffor it nys but stronglyng of þe soule [1007] ffor certes Ih*es*u crist is al good in hy*m* is noon inp*er*feccioñ and þerfore euere he forȝeueþ alle p*ar*fitly or ellis neuere a dele [1008] ¶ I say not if þowe be sygned to þe penytauncere for certeyn synne þat þou art bounden to shewe hem aH þe remenaunt of þi synnes of which̃

þowe hast' be shryuen of þi curate but' it' like þe of þine hu*m*ilite This is no departing' of shrift' [1009] ne I ne say not' þer as I speke of dyuisioñ of confessioñ þat' if þou haue licence. forto shryue þe to a discrete and honest' preest' and where þe likeþ / and by þe licence eke of þe curate þat' þowe ne maiste wel shryue þe of alle þi synnes [1010] but' lat' no blot be behynde. lat' no synne be vntold' as fer as þou hast' remembraunce [1011] And whan þou shalt' bene shryuen of þi Curate telle hym eke of alle þe synnes þat' þou hast done siþens þou were last' yshriuen as þis is þe wikked entent' of dyuisioñ of shrift'

[1012] ¶ Also þe verrey shrift' askeþ certeyn condicions. ffurst' þat' þou shryue þe by þi free wille not' constreyned ne for shame of folk' ne for maladie or such þingges ffor it' is reson þat' he þat' trespaseþ by his ffree wille / [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] confesse his trespas. [1013] noon oþer man shal telle his synne but' he hym self ne he shal not' nay or denye his synne ne wraþe him aȝeinst' þe preest' for his amonysynge to lete synne [1014] ¶ The seconnde condicioñ is þat' þine shrift' be lawful. þat' is to say þou þat' shryuest þe and eke þe preest' þat hereþ þi confessioñ bene verrely [1]in þe feiþ of holy church [1015] and þat' a man be not' despeired. of þe ṃercy of Ihesu Crist' And Caym or Iudas [1016] And eke a [man] mote accuse hym of his owne trespace and nouȝt' anoþer but' he shal blame & witen hym self of his owne malice of his synne and noon o*þer*. [1017] But' naþeles if anoþer man be enchesoñ or entiser of his synnes Or þat' if þe state of a p*er*sone be such thorgh which his synne is a-gregged or ellis þat' he may not' pleynly shryuen hy*m*. but' he telle þe p*er*sone þe which he haþ synned wiþe. þan may he telle it' [1018] so þat' his entent' ne be not' to bakbite þe p*er*sone but' oonly to declaren his confessioñ.

[1019] ¶ Thowe þe shalt' not' eke make no lesing' in
þine confessioñ for humilite p*ar*auenture to say
þat' þou hast' doon synnes of whicħ þou were
¶ Aug*ustinus*./ neuere gylty [1020] ¶ ffor seint' Austyn seiþ if
þow be cause of humilite makest' lesing'
of þi self þoughħ þowe ne were nouȝt' in synne aforn?
ȝit' art' þowe þan in synne þorgħ þi lesynges. [1021]
Thow most' eke shewe þi synne by þi p*ro*pre
mouþe but' þou be wexe dombe and not' by no
letter ffor þou þat' hast' done synne þou shalt' haue
þe same confess*ir* [1022] ¶ Thow shalt' not' eke
peynt' þi confessioñ be faire and subtile wordes to keuere
more þi synne ffor þan bygilest' þou þi self' &
nought' þe preest'. Thow most' tel it' platly. be it'
neuere so foule ne so horrible [1023] ¶ Thow shalt' eke
shryue þe to a preest' þat' is discrete to counsaile þee. and
eke þou shalt' not' shryue þe for veynglorie ne for
ypocrecy ne for no cause but' oonly for þe doute of
Ih*e*su crist' and þe helþe of þi soule. [1024] Thow
shalt' not' eke renne to þe preest' al sodeynly to telle hy*m*
liȝtly þi synne as who so telleþ a Iape or a tale but'
avisely and wiþ grete deuocioñ [1025] & generally
shryve þe oft' if þou often falle oft' arise by
confessioñ [1026] And if þow shryue þe ofter
þan onys of synne whicħ þ*o*u hast' be shryuen it' is
¶ Aug*ustinus* þe more merite as seiþ seint' Austyne. Thow
shalt' haue þe more lightly relesinge and grace of god
boþe of synne and of peyne. [1027] And certes onys a
ȝere at' þe leest' way it' is lawful forto bene howseled. ffor
soþly onys [a ȝere] al þingges renouellen

De satisfaccione.

[1028]
NOw haue I tolde of verrey confessioñ þat' is þe
Secounde part' of penytence

[1029] ¶ The iij. parte of penytence is Satisfaccioñ and ¶ Satisfaccio
þat' stant' generalli in almesse and in
bodily peyne. [1030] Nowe bene þere þre
manere of Almesse. Contricioñ of hert' wher a man
offreþ hym self to god. Anoþer is to haue pite of
þe defaute of his neighbours. þe [1]3 is in
ȝeuyng' of good counsaile and confort' goostly and bodily where
men han nede and namely in sustynaunce of mannys foode.
[1031] And take kepe þat' a man haþ nede of þise
þingges generalli he haþ nede of foode of
cloþinge and harborowe. he haþ / nede of charitable
counsaillinge and visitynge of prisoñ and / maladie and
sepulture of his dede body. [1032] And if þow maist' not'
visite þe nedeful wiþ þi persone. visite hym with þi
massage & / þi ȝiftes [1033] ¶ Thise bene þe generall
almasses or werkes of charite of hem þat' han temporell
richesses or discrecion of consailling' Of þise werkes
shalt' þou here at' þe day of dome

[1034] ¶ Thise almesses shuldest' þou doon of þine owne
propre þingges and hastely and / prively if þou maist'
[1035] But' naþelees if þow maist' not' doon it' prively
þou shalt' not' forbere almesse þouȝe men it' See.
So þat' it' be not' ydo for þonke of þe worlde. but' oonly
forto haue þe þonke of oure / lorde Ihesu crist' [1036] ¶ ffor
as witnesseþ seint' Mathewe .v°. A. Cite may not' be hid ¶ Matthei. v°.
þat' is sette on a mounteyn. ne men lighten not a lanterne and
putte it' vnder a bussheł. but' men sette it' on a candel-
stik to lighten þe men in þe hous. [1037] Riȝt'
so shal ȝoure liȝt' liȝten toforn men þat' þei mowe
seen ȝoure good werkes and glorifien ȝour fadere þat' is in
heuene

[1038] ¶ Now as to speken of bodily peyne. It' stont' in
preiers. in wakingges and in fastingges and in vertuous

techingges of orisons [1039] ¶ ȝe shul vnderstonde þat' orisons or preiers is / forto seyn a pitous wille of hert' þat' redresseþ in god and expresseþ it' by worde outward' to remooue harmlees. and to han þinges espirituel and durable. and somtyme temporel þingg*es* of which orisons certes þe orison of þe pater n*oster* haþ Ih*es*u crist' enclosed most' þingges [1040] ¶ Certes it is p*r*iuilegged of .3. þingges. in his dignite ffor which it is more digne þan eny oþer preiere for þat' ih*es*u crist hym self made it'. [1041] and it' is short' for it shuld' be conned more liȝtly and forto wiþhold*e* it' þe more esely in h*er*te and helpen hym self þe ofter wiþ þe orisoñ [1042] and for a man shuld' be þe lasse wery to sey it' / and for a man ne may not' excusen hy*m* to lerne it' it' is so short' and so esy. and for it' comprehendeth in it' self all*e* good preiers [1043] ¶ The exposicioñ of þis holy preier þat' is so excellent' and digne I bytake to þise maisters of theologie sauf þus moche wil I seyne. þat' whan þou preiest' þat' god / forȝeue þe þi giltes as þou forȝeuest' hem þat' a-gilten þe be ful wel ware þat' þow ne be not' out' of charite [1044] This holy [1]orison amenuseþ eke venyal synne and þ*er*fore it' ap*er*teneth specialy to penitence.

[1045] This preiere most' be trewly saide in verrey feiþ and þat' men prey to god ordynatly & discretely and deuoutly. Alway a man shal putt' his wiłł to be subiecte to þe wille of god [1046] This orison most' eke be saide wiþ gret' humblesse and ful pure honesty and not' to annoyance of eny man or wo*m*man. It' most' nedes be contynued with þe werkes of charite [1047] it' availleþ eke aȝeinst' þe vices of þe saule. ffor as seiþ seynt' Ierom ¶ By fastyng' ben saued þe vices of flesshī and by preiers þe vices of þe saule

¶ Ier*onimus*

[1048] ¶ After*e* þis þou shalt' vnderstonde þat' bodily peyne stant' in wakinge. ffor Ih*es*u c*r*ist' seiþ. wakeþ and preieþ þat' ȝe ne entre in wikked

¶ Ihe/

temptaciōns [1049] ¶ ȝe shul vnderstonde þat' fastynge stont' in .3. thyngges. In forberynge of bodily mete and drink and in forberynge of worldly Iolitees. and in forberynge of dedly synne. This is to say þat' a man shal kepe hym / from dedly synne w*ith* al his myȝt.

[1050] And þow shalt' vnderstonde eke þat' god ordayned fastyngges And to fastyng' app*er*tenetħ four þingges. [1051] largenesse to poor folk'. Gladnes of hert' espiritueħ nouȝt' to be angred nor anoyed ne to gruch for he fastetħ and also resonable houre forto ete by mesure. þat' is to say þat' a man shuld not' eten in vntyme. ne sitte þe lenger at' his table for he fasteþ.

[1052] Than shalt' þou vnderstonde þat' bodily peyne stant'. in disciplyne or techynge. by word' or by // writynge or by ensample Also in weryng' of heires. eiþer of stamyne eiþer of haberion on her naked flessħ for cristes sake and suchħ manere pen*aun*ces [1053] ¶ But' ware þe wel þat' suchħ manere pen*aun*ces ne make not' þine hert' bitter' or angry. anoyed of hym self. ffor better is to cast' away þine heire. þan forto cast' away þe swetnesse of our lord' Ih*es*u C*r*ist [1054] And þerfore seiþ seint' Poule ¶ Paulus./ ¶ Cloþe ȝou as þei þat' beñ chosen of god in hert' of mysericord'. debonairte. suffrañce and suchħ maner of cloþinge of whichħe Ih*es*u crist' is more apaide þan of heire or of hawberkes.

[1055] Then is disciplyne eke in knokkynge of þi brest'. in scourgyng' wiþ ȝeerdes. in knelynge in tribulacions [1056] in suffryng' paciently wrongges þat' bene doon to hym. and eke in pacient' suffraunce of maladies or lesyngges. of worldly CateH of wiff or childe or oþer [1]frendes

[1057] Than shalt' þow vnderstonde whichħ þingges distrowben penaunce as þis is in þre maners. þat' is drede. Shame. and hope. And whanhope þat' is desp*er*acioñ.. [1058] And forto speken / furst' of drede for whiche he

weneþ þat' he may suffre no penaunce [1059] þer aȝeinst' is remedye fforto þenk' þat' bodily penaunce. is but' short' and liteH at' þe regarde of þe peyne of helle. þat' is cruel and so longe þat' it lasteþ wiþ-outen ende.

[1060] ¶ Now aȝeinst' þe shame þat' a man haþ to shryuen hym [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] [1061] aȝeinst' þe shame shuld a man þenk' þat' by þe way of resoñ þat' he þat' haþ not' bene ashamed. to doo foule þingg*es* Certes hym ouȝt' not' be ashamed to doo fair þingges and good þingges and þat' is confessions. [1062] A man shuld' þenk þ*a*t god seeþ and woote al his þouȝtes and his werkes to hym may no þinge be hidde ne keuered [1063] ¶ Men shuld eke reme*m*bre hem of þe shame þat' is to come at' þe day of dome to hem þat' bene nouȝt' penytent' and lif in present' liff. [1064] ffor alle þe creatures in heuene in erþe and in helle shuln seen / apertly al þat' þei hyden in þis world'.

[1065] ¶ Now forto speke of þe hope of hem þat' bene so negligent' and sclowe to shryuen hem it' stant' in two maners. [1066] That' oon is þat he hopeþ to lyve longe and forto purchase mochel Richesse for his delite and þan he wil shryuen hy*m* as he seiþ he may as hym semeþ tymely ynowe come to shrift' [1067] ¶ Anoþer is of þe Surquidrye þat' he haþ in cristes mercye. [1068] And aȝeinst' þe first' he shal þenk that' our liff is in no sikernesse And eke þat' alle þe richesse of þe world' bene in aduenture and passinge as a shadowe on a walle [1069] ¶ And as seiþ seynt' *gregorie* That' it' app*er*teneþ to þe grete riȝtwisnesse of god þat' neuer shal þe peyn stynt' of hem þat' neuer nolde wiþdrawe he*m* from synne her þonkes. but' euer contynued þer Inne. ¶ ffor þilk' p*er*petuel wille to done synne shullen þei haue p*er*petuel peyne.

¶ Gregor*ius* ./.

Or Wanhope, or Despair

[1070] ¶ Whan-hope is in two maners ¶ þe furst' whan-hope is in þe mercy of Crist ¶ That' oþer is þat' þei

þenk þat' þei ne myȝt' not' longe *per*seuere in goodnesse [1071] ¶ The furst' wanhope *com*meþ of þat' he demeþ þat' he hath̄ synned so gretly so ofte and so longe liggyng' in synne þat' he shal not' be saued [1072] ¶ Certes aȝeinst' þat' cursed wanhope he shuld þenk þat' þe passioñ of Ih*es*u crist' is more [1]stronge forto vnbynde þan synne is forto bynde [1073] ¶ And aȝeinst' þe seconnd wanhope he shal þenk' þat' as often as he falleþ he shal arise by penytence. And þouȝe he neuer so long' haue lyen in synne þe mercy of *c*rist' is alway redy to receyuen hym to mercy [1074] aȝeinst' þe wanhope þat' he demeþ þat' he shuld not' longe *per*seuere in goodnesse ¶ he shal þenk þat' þe feblenesse of the deuel may no þing' doon but' men willen suffre hym [1075] And eke he shal haue strength and þe helpe of god and of al holy churche and of þe protection of aungels if him lust'

[1076] ¶ Than shullen men vnderstonde what' is þe fruyte of pen*au*nce as aftere þe wordes of Ih*es*u Crist' it' is þe endelees blisse of heuene [1077] þer Ioie haþ no *con*trariouste of woo ne greu*au*nce þer alle harmes ben passed of þis present' liff wher as is þe sikernesse fro þe peyn of helle þer as þe blisful company þat' reioysen hem euermoo euery of oþers Ioie [1078] þer as þe body of man þat' whilom was foule and derk' is more cleer þan þe sonne Ther as whilom þe body was seke and frele and feble and mortel̄ is vnmortel̄ and so stronge and so hool þat' þer may no þinge enpeire it'. [1079] wher as neiþer is hunger þrest'. ne cold̄ but' euery soule repleynshed wiþ þe siȝt of þe *par*fit' knowynge of god [1080] This blisful regne may man purchace by pouert' espirituel̄ and þe glorie by lownesse. þe plente of Ioy by hunger' and þrest'. and þe rest' by travaille and þe liff by deeþ and mortificacioñ of synne.

¶ Verba saluatoria

To þilk' liff he vs bringe þat' bouȝt' vs wiþ his precious blood./ Amen./

¶ Explicit' fabula Rectoris./

Here takeþ þe maker of þis booke his leue:/

[1081]
NOwe prey I to hem alle þat' harken þis litel tretise. or rede þat' ȝif þer be eny þing' in it' *þat* likeþ he*m* þat' þerof þei þonk our lord Ih*es*u crist' of whom procedeþ al witte and al goodnes. [1082] And ȝif þer be eny þing' þat displese hem./ I prey hem also þat' þei arette it' to þe defaute of myne vnkonnynge and not' to my wille þat wold' ful fayn haue seide better ȝif þat' I had hade co*nn*ynge. [1083] ffor our boke seiþ ¶ AH þat' is writen is writen for our doct*r*ine & *þat* is myñ entent' [1084] [1]Wherfore I biseche ȝou mekely for þe mercy of god þat' ȝe prei for me þat' crist' haue mercy on me and forȝeue me my geltys [1085] and namely of my translaciōns and enditingg*es* of worldly vanytes þe which I reuoke in my retraccions [1086] As is þe boke of Troiles. The book also of fame. The boke of the xxv. ladies./ The boke of þe duchesse. The boke of seynt' valentynes day of þe p*ar*lement' of briddes. The tales of Canterbury þilk þat sownen into synne [1087] The book of þe lyōn and mony oþer bokes ȝif þei were in my remembraunce. and mony a songe. And mony a lecherous lay *þat'* Crist' for his gret' mercy forȝeue me þe synne. [1088] ¶ But' of þe translacioñ of Boys de *con*solacione and oþer bokes of legendys of seyntes and omelies and moralite & deuocioñ [1089] of þat' I þonke our lord Ih*es*u crist' and his blessed/ modere and alle þe seyntes of heuene [1090] bysechyng' hem þat' þei from hens forþ vnto my lyues ende sende me *grace* to bywaile my giltes and to stody to þe sauacioñ of my soule. and graunt' me grace of verrey pen*au*nce. con-

fession and satisfaccioñ to doon in þis present liff [1091] þorghe þe benigne grace of hym þat is kyng of kyngges and preest of alle preestes þat bouȝt vs wiþ þe precious blode of his hert [1092] So þat I may bene oon of hem at þe day of dome þat shal be saued./ Qui cum patre & spiritu sancto vivis & regnas deus &cetera.

Here endeþ þe boke of þe talys of Canterbury compiled by Geffray Chawcer on whoos soule Ihesu crist haue mercy. || AmeN ||

[*Square painting of the arms of Henry Percy, 4th Earl of Northumberland, K.G., quartering Poynings, Fitz Payn and Bryan.* H *on the right,* P *on the left of the shield, in a Garter with the legend* 'hony . soit . qui . mal . y . pence..' *A lion, unicorn, &c, in the* 4 *corners.*]

APPENDIX (to Group B, p. 591).

[*Christ Church MS.* 152.] [on leaf 173, back, sign. k 2, back]

¶ Sire Nonnes preest oure hoost seyde a none
y-blessed be thy breth & eu*er*y stoone
This was a mery tale of Chaunteclere
But be my trouthe if *tho*u were seculere
Thow woldeste bene a tredefoul a right
ffor if thow haue corage as *tho*u haste myght
The were nede of hennes as I wene
Ye moo than .vij. tymes seventene
See whiche braunnes hath *thi*s gentel preeste
So grete a nekke & so large a breeste
He loketh as a Sparhauke with his yen
Hym nedeth nat his colour for to dyen [leaf 174, sign. k 3]
with Brasile ne with Greyne of Portyngale /
Now sire faire falle yow for youre tale
And aftir he with fuꝗ mery chere
Saide vnto a nother as ye shulle here

Here is ended the Nonnes prestes tale
And folowiꝗ the p*ro*loge of the Mauncipies tale

PETWORTH MS. APPENDIX

OF SECTIONS, WOODCUTS, ETC., NOT IN THE PETWORTH MS.

PAGE

1. End of the *Sum'ner's Tale*, l. 2159-2294 of Group D, § 6, from the Additional MS. 5140 in the British Museum. ('Twould have followd p. 334 above, had it been in the Petworth MS., instead of the spurious lines there given.) 705

2. The *Clerk-Merchant-Link*, Group E, § 3, from the Additional MS. 5140, British Museum. ('Twould have followd p. 373 above (instead of the *Merchant's End-Link*, p. 374), had it been in the Petworth MS.) 710

3. Drawings of the 23 *Tellers of the* 24 *Canterbury Tales*, copied from the Ellesmere MS.,[1] and cut on wood by Mr Hooper.

4. Drawings of 6 *Tellers of* 6 *Canterbury Tales*,—the Reeve, Cook, Monk, Pardoner, Wife of Bath, and Manciple—and 6 *Allegorical Figures*—Wrath and Mercy, Gluttony and Abstinence, Lechery and Chastity,—from the Cambridge University MS., Gg. 4. 27, cut by Mr Hooper.

[1] The Ellesmere cuts can be arrangd either in their order in the Ellesmere MS., or in the *Six-Text* order of the Tales. In the latter they 'll be easier to find. See these two orders on p. 704.

Six-Text Order of Tales.

		Group
1.	Knight	A
2.	Miller	A
3.	Reeve	A
4.	Cook	A
5.	Man of Law	B
6.	Shipman	B
7.	Prioress	B
8.	Chaucer	B
9.	Monk	B
10.	Nun's Priest	B
11.	Doctor	C
12.	Pardoner	C
13.	Wife of Bath	D
14.	Friar	D
15.	Sum'ner	D
16.	Clerk	E
17.	Merchant	E
18.	Squire	F
19.	Franklin	F
20.	Second Nun	G
21.	Canon's Yeoman	G
22.	Manciple	H
23.	Parson	I

Ellesmere MS. Order.

		Group
1.	Knight	A
2.	Miller	A
3.	Reeve	A
4.	Cook	A
5.	Man of Law	B_1
6.	Wife of Bath	D
7.	Friar	D
8.	Sum'ner	D
9.	Clerk	E
10.	Merchant	E
11.	Squire	F
12.	Franklin	F
13.	Doctor	C
14.	Pardoner	C
15.	Shipman	B_2
16.	Prioress	B_2
17.	Chaucer	B_2
18.	Monk	B_2
19.	Nun's Priest	B_2
20.	Second Nun	G
21.	Canon's Yeoman	G
22.	Manciple	H
23.	Parson	I

1.

END OF THE SUMMONER'S TALE.

[*Addit.* 5140, *Brit. Mus.*, *on leaf* 123, *back.*]

[And fet his felawe / ther that lay his store
He loked as he were a wilde bore
And grynt *with* the teth / so was he wroth̃ 2161
A sturdy pas / do*un* to the court he goth̃
Wher that ther woned / a man of grete honour
To whom that he / was alway confessour 2164
This worthy man̄ / was lorde of that vyllage
This ffrere cam / as he were in a rage Sompno*ur* [leaf 124]
Wher as the lorde / sat etyng at his borde
Vneth myh̃t the frere / speke a worde 2168

Til at last / he seid god you see [Addit. MS 5140]
This lorde gan look / and sayd benedicite
What ffrere lohn / what maner worlde is this
I see weel / that som thing is a-mys 2172
Ye looke / as the woode wer ful of thevys
Sit doun a-noon / and telle me what you grevis
And it shaH ben amendid / yf y may
I haue q*uod* he / had a foul despyt this day 2176
God yelde it you / a-doun in your village
That in this worlde / ther nys so pore a pape
That he nolde haue / abhomynac*ioun*
Of that y haue / receyved / in the toun 2180
And yit ne grevith it me also sore
As that the olde chirle / w*ith* lokkis hoore
Blasfemed hath / our holy covent eek
Nowe maist*er* q*uod* this lorde / y you beseeche 2184
No maist*er* q*uod* he / but a servitour
Thouh y haue had in scole / that honour
God lyketh nat / that raby men vs calle
Nothir in Markat / ne in your large halle 2188
No force q*uod* he / but telle me aH yo*ur* greeff
Sir q*uod* this ffrere / an odious myschieff
This day betid is / myn ordre and me
And so p*ar* consequens / in eche degre 2192
Of holy chirch[1] / god amende it sone [[1] *Looks like* chuche *in the MS*]
Sir q*uod* the lorde / ye wot what is to don*e*
Distempir you nat / ye be my confessour
Ye be salt of the erth / and the souour 2196
ffor goddis love / your pacient now holde [*leaf* 124, *back*]
TeH me your greef / and a-non he him tolde
As ye haue herd beforne / ye wot weH what
The lady of the hous / ay stiH sat 2200
Tyl she hadde harde / aH what the ffrere said
By goddis modir q*uod* she / the blisful mayd
Is ther auht ellis / telle me feithfully
Madame q*uod* he / how thinke ye herby 2204

How that me thenkyth *quod* she / so god me spede [Addit. MS 5140]
I sey a cherl / hath don a cherlis dede
What sholde y sey / god lat him nevir the
His sike hed / is ful of vanyte 2208
I holde him / in a maneer ffrenesie
Madame *quod* he / bi god y shall not lye
But yf y / be any weyes may be wreke
I shall diffame him / oviral wher y speke 2212
The fals blasphemour / that chargid me
To depart / that wol not departed be
To euerych man / alych *with* myschaunce
The lord sat styll / as he wore in a traunce 2216
And in his hert / he rolleth vp and doun
How that this cherle / had ymaginacioun
To shewe such a *pro*bleme / to the ffrere
Nevir e[r]st er nowe / her y of such matere 2220
I trow the devill / put it in his mynde
In ars / shall no man / metryk fynde
Byforn this day / of such a questioun
Who sholde make / a demo*n*stracioun 2224
That eu*er*y man / shulde haue lyk his part
As of soun / or of savour / of a fart
O nyce prowde chirll / y shrew his face
Loo sirs *quod* the lorde / what harde grace 2228
To euery man lyk / telle me howe Sompno*ur* [*leaf* 125]
That a fart / sholde be dep*ar*ted nowe
It is an Impossible / it may nat be
Ey nyce cherl / god lat him nevir the 2232
The romblyng / of a fart / and eu*er*y soun
Nys but of heyr / reuerberac*i*oun
And ther it wasteth / lytel and lytel a-wey
Ther is no man / can deme bi my fey 2236
Yf that it were / dep*ar*ted equally
What lo my cherle / lo howe shrewdely
Vnto my confessour / to day he spak
I holde him certayn / a demonyak 2240

Now ete your mete / and lat the chirle go play [Addit. MS 5140]
Lat him go hang him self / a devylway

[*The Solution of the "Probleme" by the Lord's Squire. No break in the MS.*]

Now stood the lordis Sqwyer / atte boorde
That karf his mete / and herd woorde bi woorde 2244
Of aH thing / whiche y haue said
My lorde q*uod* he / be ye nat eviH a-payde
I cowde telle / for a gowne clothh
To you sir frere / so ye be nat wrothh 2248
How that a ffart / shaH evene delt bo
A-mong your covent / yif it lyke the
TeH q*uod* the lorde / and thou shalt haue a-non)
A gowne clothh / bi god and bi seint Iohn) 2252
My lord q*uod* he / whan that the wedir is fair
Ryht her bifore you / sitting in a chayr
Lat bryng a cart wheel / her in-to this haH
But loke that it haue / his spokys holis aH 2256
xij. spokys / hath a cart wheel comon)ly
And bryng me xij. ffrerys / wyte ye why
ffor xiij^ne^ is a covent as y gesse /
Your confessour heer / for his worthynesse 2260
ShaH *par*forme vp the noumbre of his covent [*leaf* 125, *back*]
Thanne shaH ye knele adou*n* / bi oon assent
And to eu*er*y spokis ende / in this maneer
ffuH sadly ley in his nose / shaH a ffrere 2264
your noble confessour / god him save
ShaH holde his nose vpriht / vndir the nave
Thanne shaH this chirl / w*ith* bely styf and touht
As any tabur / hidir be brouht 2268
And set him on the wheel / ryht of this carte
Vpon) the nave / and make him let a fart
And ye shaH seyn) / vp pereil of my lyf
By preeff / whiche is demonstratyf 2272

That equally / the sou*n* of it wol wende [Addit. MS 5140]
And eek the stynk[1] / vnto the spokys eende [[1] *altered from* stinch]
Sauf that this worthi man) your confessour
Bicause he is a man / of gret honour 2276
Shal haue the first frute / as resou*n* is
The noble vsage of ffreris / it is this
The worthiest man of hem al / shaH ferst be served[2] [[2] *d* written over *st*]
And certeynly / he hath it wel deserued 2280
He hath to day tauh̄t vs / so moch good
Wyth preching in the pulpet / ther he stood
That y may vouchesauf / y say for me
He hadde the first smeH / of ffart*is* thre 2284
And so woH aH thys covent hardely
He berith him so fair / and so hoolyly
The lord / the lady / and ech̄ man) sauf the ffrere
Said that Iaynkyn) / spake in his mateere 2288
As weH as Euclido / or Partholome
Touchyng the Cherlis / thei seiden) / subtilte
And bi witt / made him speke as he spake
He is no fool ./ nor no domynyak Sompno*ur* [*leaf* 126]
And Iaynkyn) / hath̄ wonne a new gowne 2293
My tale is don) / we be almost at towne

Explicit fabula Apparitoris] [Addit. MS 5140 *extract stops*]

2.

[*Addit. MS, Brit. Mus.*, 5140, *leaf* 148.]

Marchaunt

[WEpyng and weylyng / care and othir sorwe
I knowe Inouh / on evyn and on morwe
Quod the marchaunt / and so don othir mo
That weddid be / I trowe that it be so 1216
fful wel y wot / it farith so by me
I haue a wyf / wors may non be
ffor thouh the feende / to hir coplid were
She wolde him ouyr macche / I dar wel swere 1220
What shulde y reherce / in specialle
Hir hih malice / she is a shrewe wyth alle
Ther is a long / and a large difference
Betwene Grisildes / grete pacience 1224
And of my wyf / the passing cruelte
wer y on-bounde / also mot y the
I wolde neuir eft / com in the snare
we weddid men / lyve in sorwe and care 1228
Assay who wyh / and he shah fynde
That y sey soth / be seynt Thomas of ynde
As for the more partye / y sey nat alle
God shelde / that it sholde so be-falle 1232
A good sire ost[1] / y haue wedded be [[1] ? *MS* oft]
Thes monethes too / and moo nat parde
And yit y trowe / that he that ah his lyf
wyfles hath ben / thouh that men wolde him ryffe 1236
Vnto the hert / ne cowde he in no maneer
Tellen vs so moche sorwe / as I nowe heer
Cowde telle of my wyfys / cursidnesse
Nowe q*uod* our ost / marchaunt so god you blisse 1240
Sith so mychil / knowe ye of that arte
fful hertely y p*ray* / telle vs a parte
Gladly q*uod* he / but of myn owne sore
ffor sory hert / y telle may no more 1244
Explicit prologus Mercatoris] [Addit. MS 5140 *extract ends*]

DRAWINGS OF THE 23 TELLERS

OF THE

24 CANTERBURY TALES,

COPIED FROM THE ELLESMERE MS,

AND CUT ON WOOD,

BY

Mr W. H. Hooper.

b

In this first issue, 1871, *only* 14 *of the Cuts are given. The other* 10 *will follow in* 1872. *When the print of each MS is bound, the cut of each Teller of a Tale can be put at the beginning of his Tale, as in the Ellesmere MS, or by his description in the General Prologue, to contrast the artist's hand with the poet's; or, all the cuts can be put together before or after the Prologue, or at the end of the volume (as not part of the MS), according to the fancy of each Member.*

THE MILLERE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 38, back.

THE KNYGHT.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 14.

(The brand on the horse's hip—M, ? for *Miles*—
is in ink, and probably by a later hand.)

THE COOK.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 51.

THE REVE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 46.

THE WYF OF BATHE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 76.

THE MAN OF LAWE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 54, back.

THE FRERE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 80, back.

THE SOMONOUR.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 85, back.

THE CLERK OF OXENFORD.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 92.

THE SHIPMAN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 147, back.

THE PRIORESSE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 152, back.

CHAUCER.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 157, *back.*

THE MONK.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 173.

THE NONNES PREEST.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 183.

3
2

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